



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

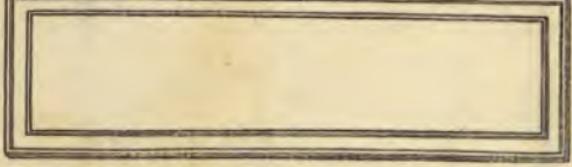
- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

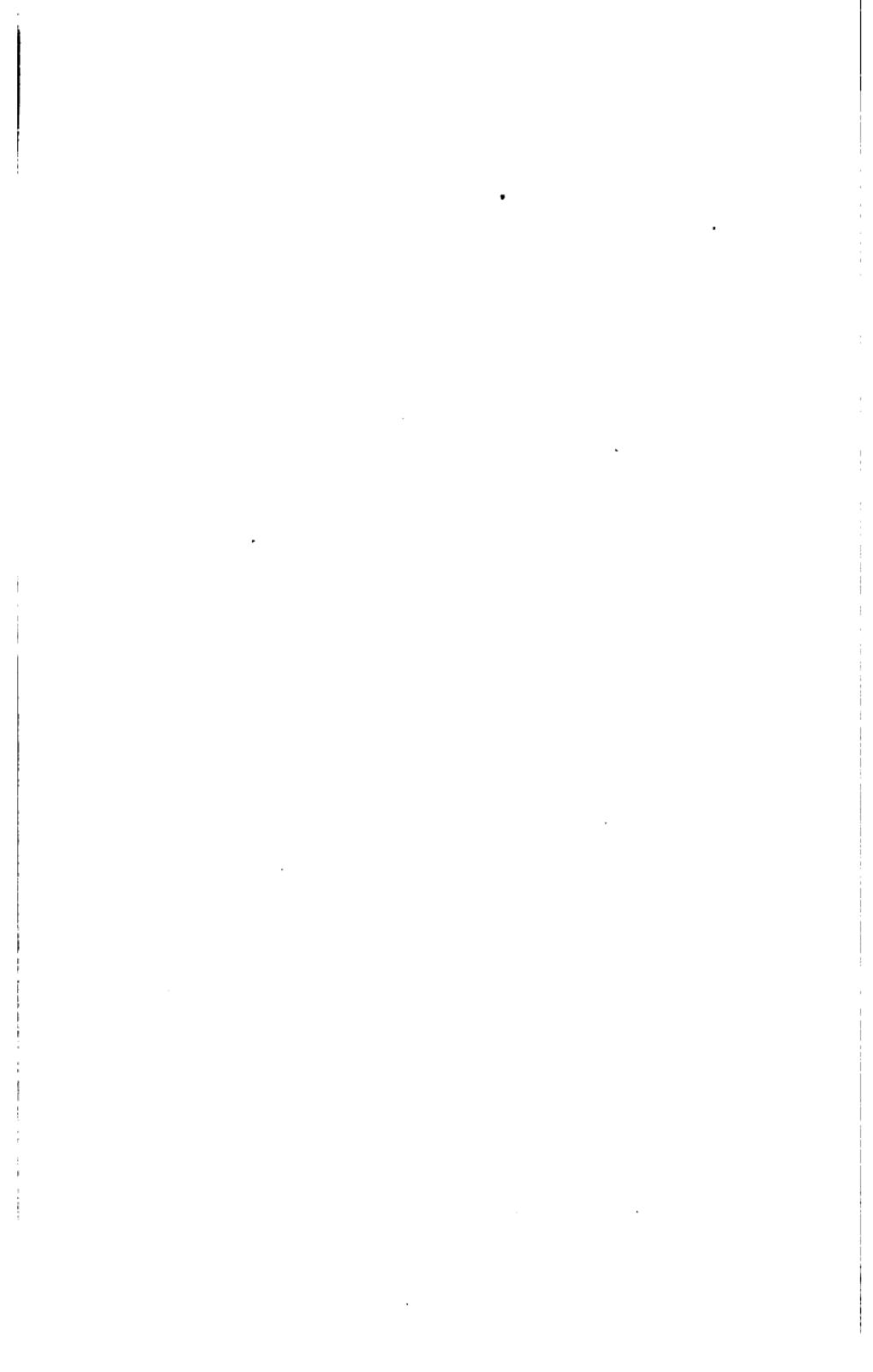
About Google Book Search

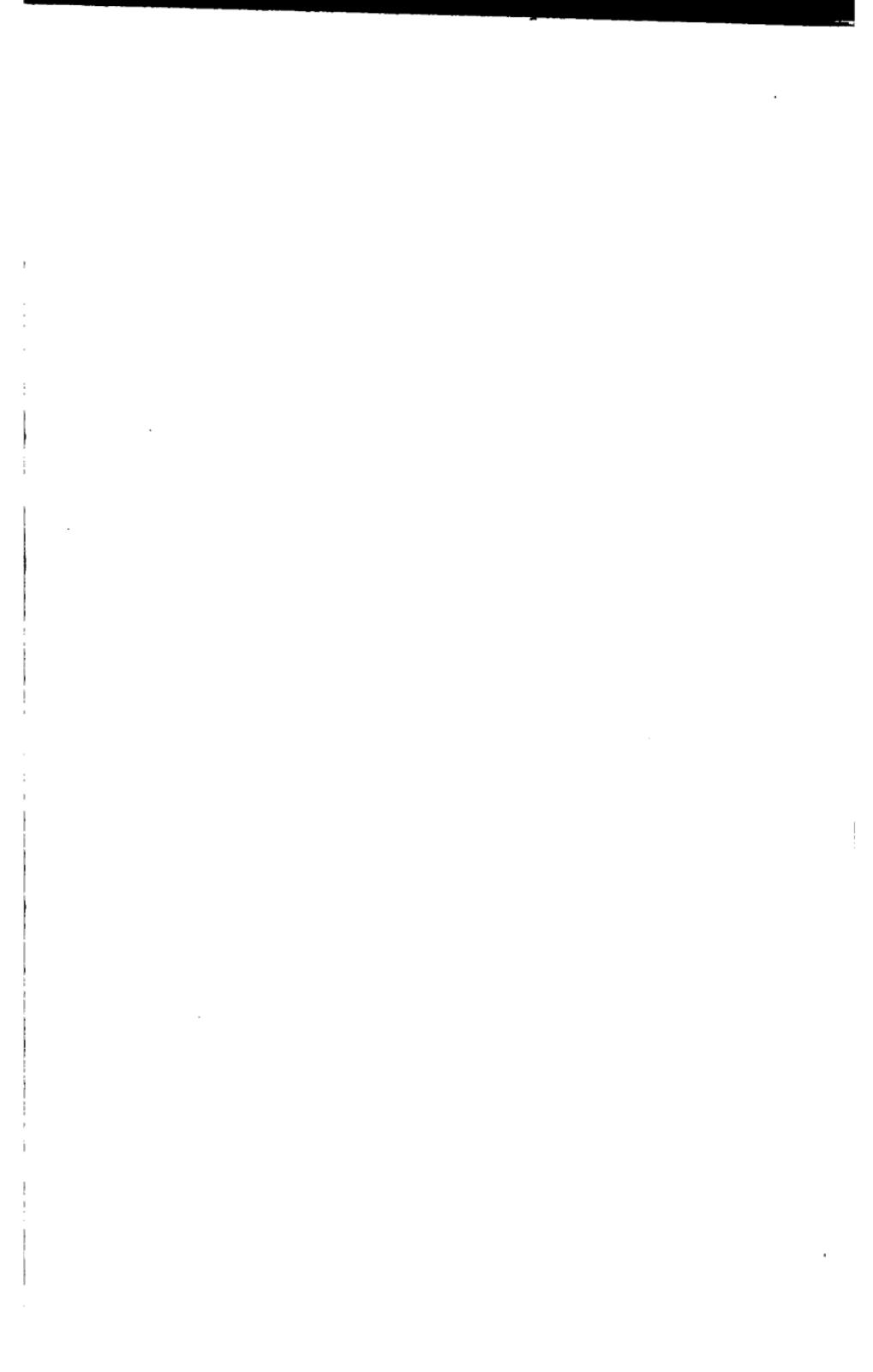
Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

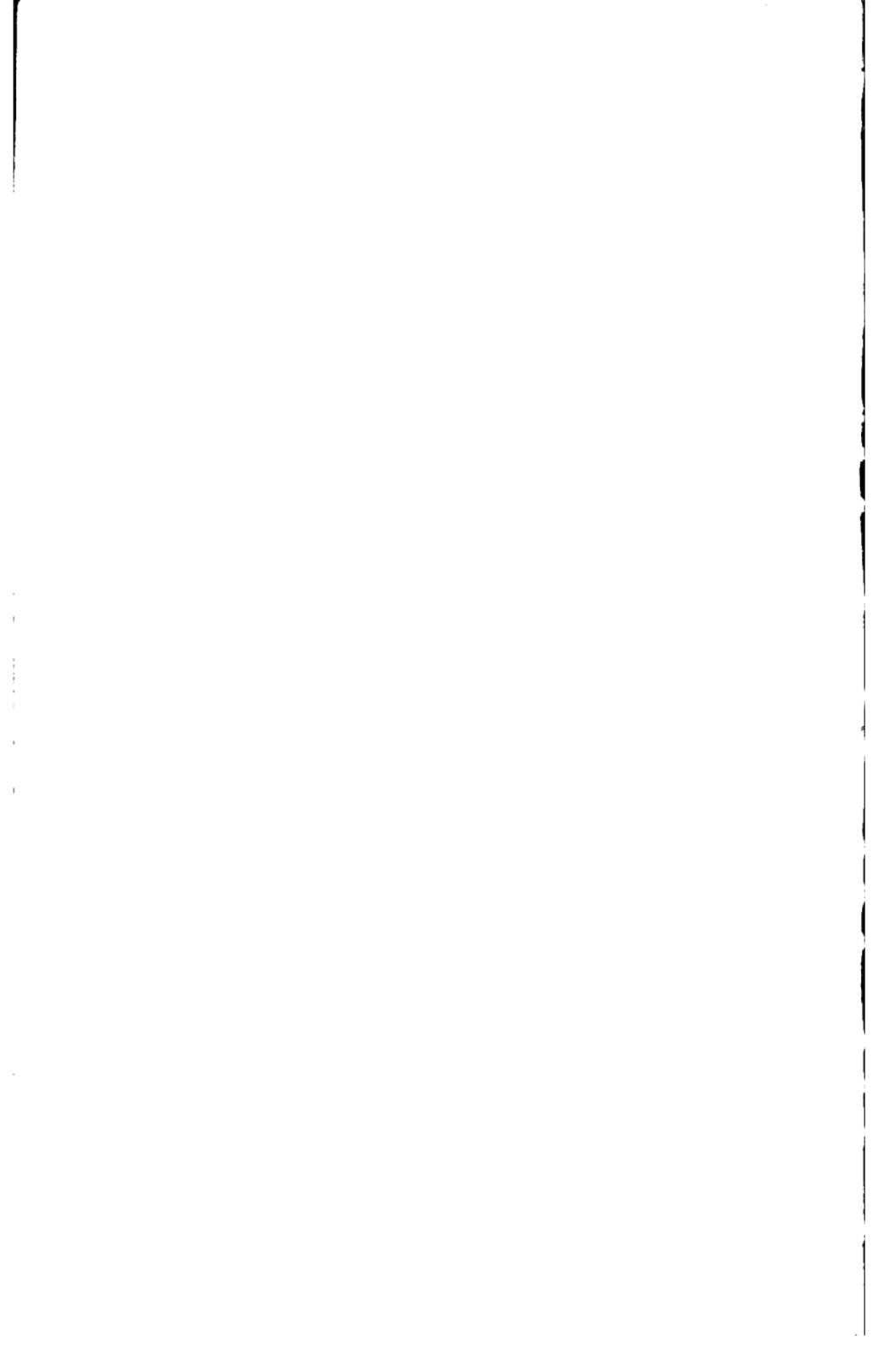


EX LIBRIS









Myths and Facts
of the
American Revolution.

A Commentary on United States History
as It is Written

BY

ARTHUR JOHNSTON

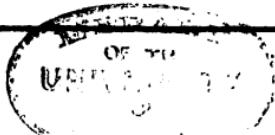


"Nescire quid antea quam natus sis accederit, id est
semper esse puerum."

"Tot ou tard tout se sait."

"Tell truth and shame the Devil."

TORONTO
WILLIAM BRIGGS
1908



E203
JY

MISSISSAUGA

Copyright, Canada, 1908, by WILLIAM BRIGGS.

TO THE MEMORY
OF
The Loyalists
TRUE "HEROES OF THE REVOLUTION,"
WHO SACRIFICED
THEIR LIVES AND FORTUNES
IN AN ATTEMPT TO PRESERVE
THE INTEGRITY OF AN EMPIRE THAT HAS
FORGOTTEN THEM,
THIS LITTLE BOOK IS INSCRIBED BY
THEIR FELLOW-COUNTRYMAN,
THE AUTHOR.

206401

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
TO THE READER	7
I. THE MYTH AND THE MYTH-MAKERS	15
II TAXATION, COLONIAL COMMERCE, CHURCH DOMINATION, COLONIAL REPRESENTA- TION, PETITIONS, BRITISH OPPRESSION AND BRITISH ENCOURAGEMENT TO RE- VOLT	29
III. INDIANS, HESSIANS, AND BRITISH BAR- BARITY	53
IV. THE INSURGENT TROOPS AND THEIR ALLIES	65
V. PHILANTHROPIC TREASON	89
VI AMERICAN PATRIOTISM AND SELF- SEEKING	98
VII. SOME CRIMES COMMITTED IN THE NAME OF LIBERTY	120
VIII. LOYALTY AND PSEUDO-LOYALTY	133

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
(IX) THE ROYAL SCAPEGOAT	149
X. THE RIGHTS OF PROPERTY AND OF MAN. 154	
(XI) SELF-GOVERNMENT AND NATURAL LAW . 166	
XII. DO THE ANGLO-BRITANNIC RACE AND THE REST OF THE WORLD OWE THEIR FREE INSTITUTIONS TO THE SUCCESS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION?	171
XIII. WHAT DO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE OWE TO THE REVOLUTION?	197
(XIV) THE FACTS	217
NOTES	255



TO THE READER

"CANDOR," Ambassador James Bryce is reported to have said, "is the first requisite to the uninterrupted progress of Anglo-American good-will. We want to get together and speak our minds freely."

In so saying, the distinguished gentleman had reference solely to conditions existing, or liable to arise, causing misunderstandings and ill-feeling between the peoples of Great Britain and the United States. But if, in order to nourish mutual sentiments of good-will between these peoples, and to do away with the mistrust and prejudice cherished by the latter to the former, it be needful to use candor and to give free expression of opinion regarding existing conditions, vastly more needful, and, indeed, essential, to the accomplishment of that object, is it to use candor and a free expression of fact regarding the original source of this mistrust and prejudice—the American Revolution.

Why this is essential no one who has lived long among Americans, and being not of them, needs to be informed. It is because distrust of, and a latent antipathy to, England and Englishmen is the inheritance of every citizen of the great Republic born or educated on its soil. Their minds are so filled and obsessed by the lessons taught by the absurd and mendacious American school histories and traditions that they are incapable of dissociating Englishmen of the present generation from those who participated in the scenes enacted in the early history of their country. Almost unconsciously they adjudge them *particeps criminis* in the supposed sinful designs of their forefathers against

TO THE READER

the liberties of their own; and they cannot free their minds from the belief that all Englishmen in secret cherish vindictive feelings towards the United States and their citizens because of the failure of these designs. Where England, her government and her people are concerned, the Revolutionary Myth dominates their every thought.

It is certain, then, that until this hereditary prejudice is removed from the minds of Americans they will never regard their British cousins as their friends. Until it is removed, all offers of fellowship and goodwill coming to America from across the sea, however sincere or magnanimous they may be, will fail of the desired effect. No plea of *mea culpa*, so often put forth on behalf of their country by British writers, whether prompted by ignorance or false magnanimity, will suffice to remove from the minds of Americans this distrust and antipathy, founded, as it is, on misconception and vicious teachings.

On the other hand, no well-informed and self-respecting Briton can respond with unrestrained cordiality to overtures of friendship made by Americans so long as they cherish this latent distrust of his country and his countrymen, because it is impossible to believe them sincere, and because without mutual confidence there can be no true friendship.

Thus both peoples are held in bonds forged by prejudice, bonds from which no one-sided concessions, no sincere or insincere confession of wrong-doing, is able to release them. Truth alone will set them free.

"But this will never do!" I seem to hear some patriot exclaim. "Truth is not always to be told; especially when it may tend to annihilate the spirit of patriotism in a great and free people, by destroying their belief in the immaculate virtue and wisdom of the founders of the Republic and the righteousness of their cause."

A few years ago, in an address to the American Historical Association, of which he was President, a distinguished citizen of Massachusetts, a well-known United

TO THE READER

States Senator, expressed his views of the duties of an historian.

"If in anything the love of country or a lofty enthusiasm may have led him to paint her in too favorable colors," he said, "the sober judgment of time will correct the mistake. No serious harm will have been done. . . . It is surely better to err on the side of ennobling the country's history than to err on the side of degrading it. . . . *It is the memory of virtue that should be immortal, and it is best that the memory and example of evil should perish.* . . . I do not see how the love of country can long abide toward a country which is altogether unlovely. No man can feel a noble pride in a base history."*

After reading these words it is a little confusing to find the orator, in the same speech, declaring that he is "pleading for no departure from absolute verity," and that "the first duty of the historian is to absolute truth."† It would seem the gentleman protests too much.

But there is no mistaking his meaning. In a few words, it is that truth should be sacrificed on the altar of patriotism so that its devotees may grow great and multiply. No Jesuit was ever accused of the promulgation of a doctrine more false and mischievous. It would seem that the learned orator needs to be informed that there is nothing more "unlovely" and "base" than falsehood, and that it is powerless to "ennoble" anything. Were the annals of nations to be registered in this spirit, the historic tomes would stand like headstones on the grave of truth.

Nor is it less absurd than false. Suppose, for example, that British historians, led by "lofty enthusiasm," had painted their country's history "in too favorable colors," had "ennobled" it by "immortalizing" all that was virtuous therein, and making to

*Inaugural address of Hon. George F. Hoar, Dec. 27th, 1895.

†*Ibid.*

TO THE READER

perish all that was evil, so that their countrymen might be brought to "feel a noble pride" in it! Then it might have been recorded of England that *her* "pilgrim fathers," the Saxons, came to Britain on a mission of amity and good-will; that her early Williams, Henrys and Edwards were consistent members of the Peace Society and never coveted that which was not their own; that her eighth Henry was a faithful and indulgent husband, on principle a strict monogamist, his eldest daughter renowned for religious tolerance and tenderness of heart; that her Charleses were men of high honor and fidelity; that Chief Justice Jeffreys was an impartial and merciful judge, and Kirke's "Lambs" lambs indeed with the whitest of fleeces! Then it might have been boasted that the British people had never sought aggrandisement, and had ever been eager to uphold the independence and welfare of other races; that their mission in India was solely to give peace to native jarring factions, and their restrictions on the trade of Ireland were but for the purpose of fostering its infant industries. These, and many other such "absolute truths," might have become articles of faith to every Englishman, and their history rendered delightful and inspiring reading.

Of course, too, the British historian would have seen his duty in denying every allegation of wrong-doing made against his country by American writers, in the matter of their Revolution, without being at any pains to inquire into their truth or falsity, since it would behoove him to see that all memory of evil in the history of his country should perish—just as the American historian would see his duty in insisting upon their truth—otherwise, how could he "ennoble" his country's history? Thus would ensue a maze of absurdities and contradictions without a clue. It would be to dress history in cap and bells, like a mediæval jester, with a bauble for a stylus.

But is it true that faithfully to chronicle the history of the great Republic would annihilate or impair the

TO THE READER

spirit of patriotism in her sons? If their faith in the immaculate virtue of their fathers of Revolutionary days and the goodness of their cause were disturbed, would their patriotism sicken and die for want of needful stimulant? I do not believe that true patriotism is so anæmic as this! Can patriotism find no food to feed on save ancestor-worship? When first were promulgated the speculations of the Evolutionists, it was objected by the old school of orthodoxy that the destruction of the people's belief in special creations would result in the degradation of mankind in its own eyes. To this Thomas Huxley replied that, in his opinion, it was far more degrading to humanity to have fallen from the estate of angels than to have risen from the status of the brute. As with the Eden story so might it be with the American Revolutionary Myth. Surely the American people should feel more degradation in having fallen from the lofty plane of virtue, wisdom and morality upon which their forefathers are supposed to have stood, than to be able, truthfully, to boast that they have maintained or advanced their standard of virtue, and so have not fallen at all.

Besides, why should it be assumed that they have no ancestry of which they may be justly proud except the "Revolutionary Fathers" and their adherents? Though we may disregard the fact that by far the greater number of the progenitors of the present generation of Americans living at the time of the Revolution first saw the light in alien lands—not a few in the country of their cherished enemy—still it should be remembered that a very large number of these progenitors, native to the soil, were opposed to the claims and acts of the revolutionists, and testified to the sincerity of their convictions by the sacrifice of their freedom and their lives. When the truth is acknowledged, why may not patriotic Americans feel proud of their Loyalist ancestors, who thus suffered persecution "for conscience' sake"? That this is possible is proven by an analogous fact. In the Northern States, a generation

TO THE READER

since, the names of the constructors and defenders of the Southern Confederacy were never mentioned but in terms of hatred and obloquy as malefactors and traitors to their country. Now many of them are honored as heroic sons of a reunited nation. If, from having obtained a more just view of the objects of these men, and having found them not altogether evil, the men of the North to-day can thus look with pride upon the achievements of their Southern brethren, though they attempted to disrupt the Commonwealth, were as full a light thrown upon their actions might they not honor the motives of those who opposed its formation? For then it would be found that the intent of *these* men was but to prevent the disruption of the Empire to which all Americans then owed allegiance, and that their patriotism perhaps was as pure as, and certainly was more unselfish than, that of their detractors and persecutors.

The life-blood of these men, so long despised and vilified, mingles with the best blood of the Republic. Their steadfastness of character, their patience and courage under the infliction of cruel and undeserved persecution, has been transmitted to its citizens, and has helped to raise higher its character among the nations of the earth. They cannot be ignored, and to condemn them is to attaint the blood of the whole nation.

Surely it is time that the citizens of the great Republic should more closely scan the records of its foundation, and no longer remain complacently content with fairy tales in the guise of history, vicariously flattering to their vanity. If it be true, as Cicero has declared, that a people who know not their own history are children, babes in arms must be those who know it wrongly. The facts once learned, both branches of the Anglo-Britannic race will be the gainers. To Americans the British will no longer appear, as for generations they have, their "cruel and unrelenting enemies," and, to the British, Americans will appear as just and generous friends. Above all, Americans will have the inestimable satis-

TO THE READER

faction of knowing that their historic records are free from falsehood and vainglory.

For these reasons, in accordance with the precept of Mr. Bryce, I have "spoken my mind freely." Or, more accurately, I have suppressed no fact appearing on record, and spared no comment thereon, because of the tendency of either to show to the disadvantage of the instigators of the American Revolution, or to prove the falsity of the received version of its history. For this I have no apology to make, and no comment, save in the words of the Apostle: "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?"*

It may be that because of this, and because in the following pages there is found no detailed account of the sins of commission and omission of the British Government from the time of the voyage of the *Mayflower* to that of the tea-ships, I shall be accused of a lack of the "historic spirit," and thus of being guilty of the very faults of which I have ventured to accuse others. But I do not think such an accusation would be a just one. I have denied none of these sins charged against it, except such as I hold not to have been sustained by a particle of evidence; and have avowed all in any way relating to the American Revolution that are so sustained. That these are singularly few may be a matter for surprise, but it is also a matter of fact.

This little book makes no pretension to being a history. It is solely what it purports to be, a refutation of the American Revolutionary Myth. As such it is not within the province of the writer to go out of his way to demonstrate that the Government of Great Britain (like other governments) has not been immaculate, and her people (like other peoples) have not been animated solely by sentiments of benevolence and disinterestedness.

To revert to American histories. One is inclined to suggest that there be prefixed to such of them as treat

*Galatians iv. 16.

TO THE READER

of the Revolution and the War of 1812 the words which the old printer, Caxton, prefixed to one of *his* historical romances:—"For to pass the time, this book shall be pleasant to read in, but for to give faith and belief that all is true that is contained herein, ye be at your liberty."

*Sir Thomas Malory's *Morte Darthur*.



MYTHS AND FACTS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

CHAPTER I.

THE MYTH AND THE MYTH-MAKERS.

ALL primitive communities have had their myths to account for their being. Woven on a meagre warp of fact, adorned by the fancies of *poitres*, skald, bard and troubadour, these flimsy illusions became things of beauty for the admiration and delight of future ages of men. One *modern* community has followed this example and garnished its origin with equally unsubstantial conceits, as provocative of admiration if not of delight.

The American Revolutionary Myth, risen like an exhalation from decaying facts, has little more evidence to support it than has the myth of the wolf-fostered twins of the Alban Hills, or that of the blameless British king and his circle of knights. It was not fabricated by bard or skald, but by distinguished statesmen and grave historians. It originated during the decade that preceded the declaration of independence, and reached its greatest expansion about the middle of the following century by means of the impudent perversions of Bancroft, than whom a more shamelessly unscrupulous writer never foisted upon his readers falsehood for fact in a so-called history. It pictures the revolutionists as endowed with all the cardinal virtues, paladins without

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

fear or reproach; the British and loyal Americans as destitute of every moral principle, sons of Belial and workers of iniquity.

As set forth in the pages of celebrated American histories, biographies and state papers, supplemented by the assertions of some British orators and historians, the American Revolution was brought about by unlawful and oppressive acts of the British Government. By these authorities it is substantially asserted:

That there was an attempt made by the ministry, instigated, or at least countenanced, by the King, to tax the American colonists for the benefit of the Government and people of Great Britain, they having arrogated to themselves that "dreadful authority" * in spite of the fact that these colonists had ever enjoyed the constitutional and exclusive right to "tax themselves." †

That, in the face of the protestations of the colonists, the Home Government persisted in maintaining control over their commerce and manufactures, under the provisions of the acts of navigation and trade; that the refusal of the Government to relinquish this control provoked the Revolution. "It was," wrote a celebrated English economist of the eighteenth century, "that baleful spirit of commerce that wished to govern great nations on the maxims of the counter which occasioned the American war." ‡ Many statements to the same effect have since been made, especially by British writers.

That the colonial revolt—at least in part—was caused by a fear of Episcopal domination. "No sketch of the American Revolution is adequate which does not take this influence into account," writes an eminent British historian. §

That the colonists, as a body, desired to be repre-

*Declaration of Second Continental Congress.

†Asserted by Lord Chatham and other Whig leaders, the "friends of America"; denied by Lord Mansfield and every other jurist and publicist of eminence since his time.

‡Arthur Young, Preface to the *Tour in Ireland*.

§Lecky, *History of England*, Vol. IV., p. 169.

THE MYTH AND THE MYTH-MAKERS

sented in the Imperial Parliament; that they endeavored to obtain such representation, and the failure of the Government to grant it helped to precipitate the revolt.

That the colonists repeatedly sent "humble petitions" to the King and Parliament praying for redress of these oppressive measures and the restoration of their constitutional rights; but that their petitions were treated with contempt and answered only by additional injuries.

That the denial of these constitutional rights to the colonists was made in furtherance of a "plan of despotism," deliberately formed by a "tyrant" king and his "infatuated ministry,"¹ in order to render the colonists subservient to their authority in all things that affected their interests, or—in the words of the Revolutionary leaders and their British coadjutors—to "enslave" them.

That having besieged the throne as suppliants in vain, and remonstrated with Parliament; having exhibited to mankind the remarkable spectacle of a people attacked by unprovoked enemies, without any imputation or even suspicion of offence;² having no choice between unconditional submission to tyrannical rule or resistance by force, the colonists took up arms in their own defence and drove the invaders from their shores.

That, substantially, all the inhabitants of the thirteen colonies were "of one mind" in opposition to the Home Government, and made common cause against it. In the words of the Revolutionary chiefs, the American Revolution was the uprising of "three millions of souls united in one cause;"* "one understanding governing and one heart animating the whole body;"† or, in those of an illustrious British statesman, it was a "revolt of a whole people."‡

That the people of Great Britain, likewise, were substantially of one mind, and, therefore, the American Revolution was a contest between Britain and America,

*Speech of Samuel Adams to the Congress.

†John Adams, *Letters of Novanglus: Works*, Vol. IV., p. 35.

‡Burke's *Works*, Vol. I., p. 318.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

without any material division of sentiment on either side; so that in meeting their mighty opponent on the field of war, the colonists engaged in an enterprise of daring unprecedented in the world's history, an enterprise such as only desperation could inspire and transcendent heroism achieve.

That in the attempt to reduce to subjection "a virtuous, loyal and affectionate people,"* the British Government allied itself with "the wild and inhuman savage of the woods,"† with the merciless Indians, inciting them by presents and bribes to massacre defenceless frontier families, without distinction of age or sex.³ That, with a similar cruel intent, that Government employed European mercenary troops to war against the unoffending colonists. That British officers were guilty of atrocities unprecedented in the annals of war, in burning defenceless towns and in the infliction of inhuman cruelties upon their prisoners of war.

That in spite of all their disadvantages—destitute of resources, without unity of purpose, without foreign aid, or with such as had no appreciable effect upon the result—the colonists overcame the large battalions of trained British troops sent against them, and so won their independence. In the words of Mr. Bancroft: "Without union, without magazines and arsenals, without a treasury, without credit, without government, [they] fought successfully against the whole strength and wealth of Great Britain. An army of veteran soldiers capitulated to insurgent husbandmen."‡ That even if foreign arms did aid the colonists in winning their independence—as a few American writers reluctantly admit—yet the credit and glory is all theirs, for these foreign alliances were the direct result of the success of their arms.

That at the period of the Revolution the people of the American colonies intellectually and morally surpassed

*Declaration of the Second Continental Congress.

†Speech of Lord Chatham, Nov. 18th, 1777.

‡Bancroft, *History of the United States*, Vol. III., p. 11.

THE MYTH AND THE MYTH-MAKERS

those of Great Britain and all other nationalities; they were picked men and women, superior beings as compared with the commonality and aristocracies of other countries.* Soc.

That the Revolution was conceived on a strict question of principle, and carried on, on the part of the Revolutionists—in spite of the dictum of Monsieur Nicolas Chamfort—in true rose-water style. Again, in the words of Mr. Bancroft: “The American Revolution was achieved with such benign tranquillity that even conservatism hesitated to censure. . . . The period abounded in new forms of virtue. Fidelity to principle pervaded the masses”† of the American people, while vice and degradation reigned over those of Great Britain.

That until within a few months prior to the declaration of independence the colonists one and all cherished feelings of profound veneration and fervent affection for the Government and people of Great Britain; were devoted to the colonial relation, and turned with horror from the thought of separation from the mother-land; that gladly would they have submitted to any terms of accommodation with the Home Government, short of being reduced to “abject slavery.”‡ That when forced by the insufferable tyranny of the insensate tyrants over the sea to proclaim their independence, they did so with tears and lamentations.¶ So that, in the space of a few months, Great Britain, from being that “happy island” whose people “of all the enviable things are to be envied most,” people “of a noble and generous nature, loving and honoring the spirit of liberty;” ruled by a king “the very best in the world;” “the best king any nation was ever blessed with;” than whom “scarcely could be conceived a king of better dispositions, or more exemplary virtues, or more truly desirous of promoting the welfare of all his subjects;”—in short, the best of all possible peoples, blessed with the best

*Hosmer's *Samuel Adams*, p. 89.

†*History of the United States*, Vol. III., pp. 10, 11.

‡John Adams, *Novanglus: Works*, Vol. IV., p. 28.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

of all possible rulers;—became an “old rotten state,” in which “extreme corruption” prevailed “among all orders of men;” a “wicked country,” a “sink of corruption;” whose people were filled with “bloody and insatiate malice and wickedness,” and whose king was a “tyrant,” “*Nerone Neronier;*”—with other epithets presumably for decency’s sake suggested by dashes,—who “thirsted for the blood” of the American people, “of which he has already drunk large draughts.”⁵

That there was evolved from the hearts and brains of the American people new and untried principles of government, by which men were emancipated from the arbitrary rule of kings and enabled to “govern themselves.”⁶ That they inaugurated a government over which the people were supreme: in the words of one of the most illustrious of Americans, “a new nation conceived in liberty,” “a government of the people, by the people, and for the people.”⁷

That in fighting for their independence the revolting colonists also were fighting to preserve the free institutions of Great Britain, and had they failed to attain it, not only their own freedom but the freedom of all British subjects would have been subverted and overthrown.

Such are the tenets of the cult of the Revolutionary Myth as expounded by its high priests, the most distinguished American historians, many of them being accepted as true, and some, indeed, originated, by those of Great Britain. A host of lesser American writers, enthusiastic in the faith, have amplified them to such an extent as, by comparison, to make them seem like sober fact.

One of these histories—the work of a writer of almost world-wide fame*—may be cited as an example. “In these volumes,” he writes, “I have taken the view that the American nation is the embodiment of a Divine purpose to emancipate and enlighten the human race.” A perusal of his history is in itself an enlightenment.

*Julian Hawthorne.

THE MYTH AND THE MYTH-MAKERS

For the first time we learn that Franklin "demurely arched his eyebrow;" that Samuel Adams "pointed his finger;" that "General Gage stalked about, solemn, important and monosyllabic;" that Colonel Smith at one time "held himself unusually erect," at another "puffed out his cheeks;" that during the battle of Bunker Hill Burgoyne cried "Humph!" while Joseph Warren "smiled quietly."

Happenings overlooked by other chroniclers cannot escape the purview of the clairvoyant brain of our historian. On the night of the "Boston Massacre," he sees, "by the glint of the moon," some "blood-stained marks in the snow" made by the feet of Governor Hutchinson while "in his dismay hurrying between the soldiers and the crowd." By the same pale light he observes "a sinister intent" in the "look and bearing" of Captain Preston and his squad of men, and a moment later he discerns the former "quivering with agitation."

Indeed, so often is this "agitation" manifested among the British officers in America during the colonial and revolutionary days, that we see plainly that, to fill the military and civil posts in the colonies, the Government had emptied a young ladies' finishing school, and sent its inmates to the New World, a decorous host, with a white feather for a banner.

For, during one of the campaigns of the French war, our historian—without the glint of the moon this time—espies General Webb on the field of battle "whimpering to be allowed to fall back on the Hudson," and at the same moment he perceives General Loudoun "cowering in New York."

As for Braddock! Flattering commentators have pictured this "grizzled nincompoop" as a dauntless if incompetent soldier. The picture is familiar to all: An heroic soul, insensible to his own danger, rallying his scattered forces, who, perplexed by a sudden and unaccountable assault from invisible foes—quite invisible, being concealed in natural trenches overgrown with grass—have broken their ranks, while the provincial

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

soldiers are “flying, hiding themselves behind the trees;” beating them into the open. His officers have “fallen, almost to a man,” but not while he lives shall the King’s scarlet be disgraced by lurking cowards! Let them leave such tactics to the Americans, who are to the manner born, and whose homespun clothes better match the tree-trunks and rotting logs that serve them as ramparts. The soldiers of the King shall die, if die they must, in the fair light of heaven, elbow to elbow and face to the foe!

Pooh! pooh! says our historian, that is all wrong! “Braddock has been called brave, but the term is inappropriate.” This man who “raged about the field like a dazed bull—fly he could not”—was “a poltroon at heart.” Ill-bred, too, and sadly lacking courtesy; for when he had received his fatal wound “his honor was so little sensitive that he felt no gratitude at being thus saved the consequences of one of the most disgraceful and wilfully incurred defeats that ever befell an English general.” Actually the man was not grateful for being killed!

Colonel Washington, of course, “in that hell of explosions, smoke, yells, and carnage”—all proceeding, as our historian tells us, from a few hundred painted savages and Frenchmen, no doubt armed with flint-lock muskets and bows and arrows—no more minded “the rain of bullets” than “if his body were no more mortal than his soul.” But as for the British regulars, after the fall of that “dull curmudgeon,” their commander, they “ran like sheep before the hounds, leaving the saving of the day to the Americans,” who “did almost the only fighting that was done on the English side.” It may be remarked, as a dull and uninteresting fact, that “the Americans” did not “save the day,” though there were more than “a few hundred” of them.

General Abercrombie, too, he a soldier! Why, at the siege of Ticonderoga, our historian informs us, though “he had four times as many men as Montcalm,” and “could easily have captured the works,” being “‘dis-

THE MYTH AND THE MYTH-MAKERS

tilled almost to a jelly by the act of fear,'" he "fled headlong," and, thereafter, though he "could have taken Canada with ease," he "thought only of keeping out of Montcalm's way." In fact, we are told, this campaign was remarkable only "as showing of what enormities the English of that age were capable. Their entire conduct during the French war was dishonorable and often atrocious." So we are not surprised to learn that the Americans, "who had thus far done all the fighting and won all the successes," then "took the war into their own hands, while disgrace and panic reigned among all the English commanders."

But in the following campaign the British generals behaved a little better; or, what seems more likely, they followed the example of Abercrombie and kept out of the way of the enemy. But, however this may be, we learn that "Gage was the only English officer to disgrace himself in this campaign." Still, the improvement in the *morale* of the British army was only temporary, for as soon as they came into conflict with the patriotic colonists the white feather again was prominently displayed and the civil officers were just as pusillanimous. Gage, "who had betrayed lack of courage under Amherst," was at the head of both the civil and military government; clearly no good could be expected of *him!* Bernard and Hutchinson had preceded him in civil authority, and Bernard's "cowardice made him despised, *even by the British;*" who, of course, were used to that kind of thing. As for Hutchinson, "his cowardice was equal to Bernard's." Lord Percy, too—from whom, with Chevy Chase and Salisbury Plain fresh in our minds, we should have expected better things—"soon became as frightened as the rest," and, on the day of the battle of Bunker Hill, having before "helped Colonel Smith to run away," he took to his bed and stayed there "on the plea of illness." This we know, for our historian tells us so, but Percy himself had the assurance to report that he was "upon duty in the lines on that day," and that while there he assisted in "a

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

pretty smart cannonade, which we kept up from there upon Roxbury," where lay the main body of the provincial army.

It seems that not only the courage but the wits of British officers failed them when in America; all who served there, we are told, who were not cowards, were "fools and merry-Andrews"—if, indeed, they were not both. For instance, there was that "preposterous old imbecile," Admiral Sir Hovenden Walker, and "the not less absurd" "Jack Hill." The Duke of Cumberland, too—who, strangely, did not serve in America—it seems, was "absurd" also; a remarkable discovery to be made of the "Butcher of Culloden."

After these examples it comes to us as a shock of surprise to learn that General Howe was a "fearless man." To be sure, as Howe virtually was an ally of the Revolutionists, to whom more than to all the other generals on both sides they were indebted for the ability to keep an army in the field, it seems only right that his name should be excluded from the roll of dishonor, where properly belonged the other British officers, who had not the grace to play with treason for the benefit of the enemies of their country.⁸

We learn many other things from our historian not before revealed to mortal man. For instance, that in Franklin's veins "flowed the blood of Quakers;" that the famous letters of Governor Hutchinson were written "to the English ministry;" that he (Hutchinson) "brought false charges against Franklin, and begged to receive the latter's office of deputy postmaster-general;" that his two sons, "worthy of their sire, were guilty of felony." Our historian also has discovered that "Lord George Sackville Germaine"—who never left the shores of Europe—was "cashiered for cowardice on an American field of battle." Doubtless it was appropriate that a British officer, if he played the poltroon at all, should do so "on an American field of battle."

Of course, the American officers and men were all immaculate heroes, with "dauntless hearts," who "in

THE MYTH AND THE MYTH-MAKERS

their homespun smallclothes, home-knit stockings, home-made shirts and cowhide shoes," were willing and eager to "march to the cannon's mouth."

Faith in the American Revolutionary Myth, save for the lesson at the mother's knee, is first taught in the juvenile histories to be found in lavish abundance in every school library in the United States between the two oceans. Let us take half a dozen of these works, haphazard, from the shelves of one of them (we might find as many score) and glance at their pages.

From the first one we open we learn that "England insisted that the colonists should aid in paying the heavy debt" [of the French war]; that "she would not allow them to be represented in the British Parliament," and "continued to treat them as though they had no rights whatever."*

In the next we are informed that the colonists "were forbidden to cut down trees on their own lands for staves and barrels."†

In another we are instructed that "George the Third ordered the colonists to give him money, which they felt he had no right to demand from them," and that, to a remonstrance against this unwarrantable claim, he "replied: 'I must have the tax, and if you refuse to give me the money, I shall take it by force.'"‡

From still another we gather further knowledge of the doings of that bold, bad monarch. It seems that: "Sometimes the King, without caring for the wishes of the colonists, would make laws to suit himself," and "sent orders to the Governors that the colonists should trade with no other country than his own;" that they [the colonists] "wished to build factories and weave their own cloth, but the King would not allow this," and "said that the colonists should pay the expenses of that [the French] war, and therefore began to tax them heavily."§

*A. S. Barnes, *A Primary History of the United States*, p. 90.

†Blaisdell, *The Story of American History*, p. 143.

‡Montgomery, *An Elementary American History*, pp. 117, 118.

§Beebe, *The Story of Paul Jones*, p. 20.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

From the next we learn that: "Flushed with victory, but burdened with debt, the Government of Great Britain insisted that, as America had been benefited by the conquest of Canada, America should pay the bills." The colonists "must just pay and keep quiet, England declared, and at once set about arranging things so as successfully to 'squeeze the Colonies' for money."^{*}

In the last one, which aspires to the dignity of a popular history, we find set forth, in ornate and pathetic phrase, a summary of the crimes committed by the unnatural motherland against her innocent and guileless bantlings, the colonies. Here we learn that England "made up her mind" to force them "to pay her debts, fight her enemies, subserve her interests first and always. So, with blustering words about rights, she imposed burdens, with significant hints in regard to chastisements." She "was a veritable stepmother, with the hardest of hearts;" while the colonists were "confiding and unsuspecting." From England "exaction followed exaction, in increasing intensity and number. The history of coercive legislation can scarcely find a parallel to that of the British Parliament for the fifteen years following the fall of Quebec. Withal, no excuse was ever made for the injustice done, no sympathy was ever expressed for the sufferings inflicted, but all communications conveyed the stern purpose to subdue. Hungry for affection, the half-grown offspring turned his face towards England for the smallest caress, and the east wind brought back across the Atlantic, full in his face, the sharp crack of the whip."[†]

The artist Lely painted Oliver Cromwell, "pimples, warts and everything." The American historic artist, before painting his heroes, carefully pares the warts away, making amends by covering the visages of their British enemies with these unsightly excrescences.

Surely it is not surprising that a charming French writer,[†] several times a visitor to the United States,

*Brooks, *Stories of the Old Bay State*, p. III.

†Paul Blouet ("Max O'Rell"), in *Her Royal Highness Woman*.

THE MYTH AND THE MYTH-MAKERS

should have recorded his "firm conviction" that so long as the present style of school-books are published there, there will be very little love to spare in America for the English people.

Do the American people, then, still retain faith in the Revolutionary Myth, or have they put it away with other childish things? Or is it that they, knowing it to be false and foolish, wish to preserve it as an article of national faith to feed their national vanity? It is likely that the truth is to be found in a mixture of these sentiments.

Some years ago there was published in a leading magazine of the United States* an article which, as the opinions therein expressed are fairly expressive of those held to-day by the great mass of intelligent Americans, may be cited as an example.

The writer begins by eulogizing the American Revolutionary Myth, or, as he prefers to style it, the "Heroic Age" of the United States. This "Heroic Age," he says, "we may justly boast of as one equalling in interest and grandeur any similar period in the annals of Greece and Rome; as one which would not shrink from a comparison with the chivalrous youth of any of the nations of modern Europe. It is the unselfish age, or, rather, the time when self-consciousness, both individual and national, is lost in some strong and all-absorbing emotion; when a strange elevation of feeling and dignity of action are imparted to human nature, and men act from motives which seem unnatural and incredible to the more calculating and selfish temperaments of succeeding times. . . . It furnishes a treasury of glorious reminiscences wherewith to reinvigorate, from time to time, the national virtue. . . . What political utility can there be in discovering, even if it were so, that Washington was not so wise, or Warren so brave, or Putnam so adventurous, or Bunker Hill not so heroically contested, as has been believed? Away with such scepticism, we say; and the mousing criticism

**Harper's Magazine*, Vol. V., pp. 262, 265.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

*by which it is sometimes attempted to be supported. Such beliefs have at all events become real for us by entering into the very soul of our history and forming the style of our national thought. To take them away would now be a baneful disorganizing of the national mind.”**

That is to say, these fantastic barnacles must not be scraped from the hull of the American ship of intellectual progress, lest its crew should cease to admire its fine lines and its sailing qualities become impaired.

Thus the “foolish word” comes to the aid of the “frantic boast” in the effort to prevent the fading away of the Revolutionary Myth and to uphold the national creed of Shintoism, a creed which holds criticism of its tenets to be the unpardonable sin.

*The italics do not, of course, appear in the original.

CHAPTER II.

TAXATION, COLONIAL COMMERCE, CHURCH DOMINATION, COLONIAL REPRESENTATION, PETITIONS, BRITISH OPPRESSION, AND BRITISH ENCOURAGEMENT TO REVOLT.

SURELY in this Age of Realism an attempt to expose the unsubstantiality of the Revolutionary Myth and to substitute fact for fancy will not be considered an unworthy one. This is a task which has never been fully accomplished, because not attempted with sufficient earnestness. Especially have writers neglected to collate evidence easily derivable from American records with that obtainable from British sources. Of the former the writer has availed himself freely; of the latter as freely as the more limited opportunity in that case afforded would permit; with the result, as he believes, of demonstrating the absolute falsity of the received version of the history of the American Revolution.

Neither the Bute, Grenville, Chatham-Grafton nor the North ministries—those alone held accountable in any way for the colonial revolt—attempted, proposed or pre-meditated a plan to tax the colonies for the benefit of Great Britain—that is to say, to raise a revenue in the colonies to defray any part of the expenses of the Government in Great Britain. They did propose to raise therein a stable, equitable and duly proportioned revenue to be used for the partial defrayment of the expenses of their establishments, and the cost of their protection from internal enemies and possible foreign invaders; thereby removing from the shoulders of the British tax-

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

taxpayers some part of a burden unjustly imposed upon them. Some part only; for even if this plan had been carried out, the British taxpayers still would have had to pay the whole of the principal and interest of the national debt, in large part accumulated for the benefit of the colonists, as well as the whole cost of the navy that protected their commerce and guarded their ports; both of which, therefore, the colonists should have helped to defray.¹ Upon their remonstrance even this plan was abandoned, and assurance was given them that it would not be renewed, unless in a form acceptable to them and with their co-operation.²

This assurance was never retracted, evaded or transgressed. Furthermore, had the plan been carried out, no right of the colonists would have been thereby infringed. The Imperial Parliament had the constitutional authority to impose taxes upon British subjects in America, as well as upon those in Great Britain, the Isle of Man, the Channel Islands or any other part of the British dominions; they being represented therein in the constitutional manner, that is, by every member of parliament, since each member represented, not alone the inhabitants of a particular district, but every British subject. The American colonists in their relation to the Empire stood on the same political plane as did the inhabitants of Great Britain; for though, while residing outside the limits of the United Kingdom, they could not vote for members of Parliament, *that* was a disability to which all British subjects alike were liable. Under the same conditions, the colonists, equally with them, were entitled to be electors and members of the Lower House, and as eligible to be created members of the Upper one. That the system of parliamentary representation stood in need of remodelling, by equalization, both in the colonies and Great Britain, nine-tenths of whose people, including every inhabitant of some of the large cities, were deprived of the privilege of the suffrage, there is no room for doubt; but the malcontent colonists did not ask for this reform, and would not

TAXATION, COMMERCE, OPPRESSION

willingly have accepted its benefits for themselves had it been inaugurated.

Notwithstanding the declaration of Lord Chatham that Parliament had no legal authority to tax the colonists, it is certain that no thought of an exemption from such taxation was in the minds of earlier British statesmen, nor, indeed, in those of the colonists themselves. No provision was made in the charter of any of the colonies exempting them from liability to parliamentary taxation, and in one—that of the richest and most important of them all, Pennsylvania—it was expressly affirmed. New York, almost as rich and important, had no charter, and therefore could claim no such exemption, even by implication. That the colonists regarded as evident the right of Parliament to tax them, and admitted the fact until its denial was suggested to the revolutionary propagandists as a means to acquire independence, is shown by the circumstance that it was several times affirmed by the colonial assemblies, especially that of the province which, more than any other, was responsible for the revolt, justified alone by its denial. Numerous declarations acknowledging the authority of Parliament (with more or less reservation as to its right to tax) were made even by the Disunionists, who acknowledged also the superintending authority of the ministers by addressing petitions to them, even to a late period of the Revolutionary propaganda.³

Yet in the face of these declarations the learned Daniel Webster has ventured to assert that: "The Colonies had never admitted themselves subject to Parliament. . . . They had uniformly denied that Parliament had any authority to make laws for them. There was, therefore, no subjection to Parliament to be thrown off. . . . Our ancestors had never admitted themselves subject either to ministers or to Parliament."*

This is American history in the making!

The doctrine justifying the denial of the right of Parliamentary taxation, vehemently and persistently preached

**A Discourse on Adams and Jefferson, Aug. 2nd, 1826.*

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

by Chatham, that "whatever a man has honestly acquired is absolutely his own and cannot without robbery be taken from him, except by his own consent,"* when applied, as it was, to the relation between the Government and the governed, is transparently absurd. Property acquired by a member of an organized community could not have been acquired, or retained, without the protection it afforded him; therefore the community has a valid lien upon his property for the cost of that protection. The argument advanced by Benjamin Franklin, a master of sophistry, and others, that, if this were conceded, it must also be conceded that it has a right to take all of his property, has no ground in reason.⁴ As well might it be maintained that because a shipmaster has a right to salvage he has an equal right to take possession of the ship and cargo that he rescues.

Lord Chatham declared that taxation was no part of the governing or legislative power. The property of the colonists, he maintained, was "sacred"; that, although the authority of the Imperial Government over them was "sovereign and supreme," and extended "to every point of legislation whatsoever," yet it had not the power "of taking money out of their pockets without their consent."⁵ It might demand of its transatlantic subjects their lives, but not their money!

Of course, a schoolboy can now see what, apparently, this brilliant statesman could not see, that such a government would be no government. A fishing party in the sands of the Sahara would have a no more hopeless task before them than would a government without the power of the purse.

The fact is that Lord Chatham has done more than any other British statesman or historian—with the possible exception of Edmund Burke—to confuse and falsify the facts which led to the American Revolution. No clear view of these facts can be obtained by those who allow the glamor of his name to dazzle and distort

*Speech of Lord Chatham, delivered in May, 1774.

TAXATION, COMMERCE, OPPRESSION

their vision. It is hard to believe that this illustrious exponent of the people's rights was obsequious to royalty, arrogant to his subordinates, and at times, when suffering from suppressed gout, actually insane; but so it was. Moreover, in his advocacy of the cause of the American revolutionists he was ill-informed as to his facts, at fault in his deductions, extravagant and contradictory in his assertions, and most impressive in his declamations when advocating a course of procedure opposed to common sense. Of the claims of the revolutionary propagandists Lord Chatham was curiously ill-informed; of their aims and objects he was totally ignorant.*

Though it has been many times asserted, particularly by British writers, that it was the determination of the Home Government to control the commerce and manufactures of the colonies, under the provisions of the acts of trade and navigation, that lost them to the Empire, there is no foundation for the assertion. Strangely enough, too, the writers who assert it at the same time assert that Lord Chatham (who of all the great Whig statesmen clung the most tenaciously to these acts, and predicted ruin to England if "her supreme right of regulating commerce and navigation"†—whence came that right he did not state—should be given up), if allowed to have his way, would have saved the colonies to the Empire. This is but one of many instances of the curiously inconsistent arguments of the apologists of the American Revolution.

Though the colonists complained of some of the restrictions upon their commerce established by these acts—such as those provisions affecting their sugar trade and fisheries—they made no protest against the monopoly they created, nor did they ask for their repeal, contenting themselves with accepting the bounties they provided, and disregarding such other of their pro-

*The sole source of Chatham's information regarding the colonies seems to have been Benjamin Franklin.

†Speech of Lord Chatham, On Removing Troops from Boston.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

visions opposed to their interests, as they were able, including all that affected their manufactures and internal commerce, and some affecting their external commerce. The Revolutionary propagandists did not demand their repeal, for the reason that they stood less in the way of independence than any other means of control possessed by the Home Government. In fact, they did not stand in the way of independence at all, because, as soon as all other means of control were abrogated, they necessarily would become inoperative. Therefore, we find them consenting to their operation in the "Declaration of Rights," issued by the First Congress in 1774, and, a year later, Benjamin Franklin asserting that they were "as acceptable to us as they could be to Great Britain," and that "we had never applied, or proposed to apply, for such a repeal."*

The word "consent" contained in the Declaration, of course, was inserted therein for the purpose of indicating that without it the acts would be of no force or effect, Parliament having no authority over the colonies. For the same reason Franklin and John Adams proposed that they should be confirmed by the assemblies of the several colonies;†—an artful suggestion, since it assumed the necessity of such confirmation; thereby virtually claiming for them the status of independent states.

The Declaration referred to consented only to parliamentary regulation of the "external" commerce of the colonies provided by these acts. As to the provisions regulating their internal trade and manufactures, they were complained of, it is true, especially those prohibiting the manufacture of hats and nails, as by Franklin in 1767, but, as he and his fellow agitators well knew, these restrictions had long been waste paper, and that no minister, Whig or Tory, would have dreamed of enforcing them.⁶

*Franklin's *Writings*, Vol. V., p. 16.

†*Ibid.*, Vol. V., p. 13. John Adams, *Letters of Novanglus: Works*, Vol. IV., p. 106.

TAXATION, COMMERCE, OPPRESSION

The disaffected colonists, then, assured of their ability to abrogate them whenever it became advisable to do so, were willing that the acts of trade and navigation should remain in force, but they were determined to make no other concession. As wrote one of them: "In the opinions of all the colonies, Parliament has no authority over them, excepting to regulate their trade, and this not by any principle of common law, *but merely by the assent of the colonies.* . . . There is no need of any other power in Great Britain than that of regulating trade, and this the colonists ever have been and will be ready to concede to her. *But she will never obtain from America any further concession while she exists.*"*

The repeal of the acts of trade and navigation would not have retarded the progress of the Revolution for a single day; and it is certain that the great Whig chieftains who are credited with the ability to save the colonies to the Empire, and who so vehemently acclaimed their desire to save them, would not have consented to their repeal.⁷

There is no particle of evidence to show that the fear of Episcopal domination of the colonies had any share in bringing about the American Revolution. True, the preachers of New England were among the foremost and most persistent agitators against the Government; but the Puritan clergy had ever combined politics and theology, and at the period of the Revolution the fervor of Puritanism had long passed away, and the thoughts of the pastors, as well as those of their flocks, had turned more and more to secular affairs. However they might hint at the danger of Episcopal rule in the colonies, these gentlemen were far too shrewd to believe that any such danger existed. Besides, the Episcopal inhabitants of Virginia and the Carolinas were as persistent agitators against the Government, and as enthusiastic for independence, as were their fellow colonists

*John Adams, *Letters of Novanglus: Works*, Vol. IV., pp. 33-38.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

of the North; the Catholics of Maryland did not lag behind, and it is a noteworthy fact that every colonist of that era that avowed atheistic, deistic or rationalist opinions affiliated with the Revolutionists.⁸

Had the conduct of the Revolution been entrusted solely to those who acted from religious motives, the world would never have heard of it.

Though the American Loyalists, as a body, would have welcomed colonial representation in Parliament, and some of them ardently desired it, the Revolutionists ever disliked it or were indifferent to it. Their leaders were inexorably opposed to it, feared it, and condemned it as impracticable; for they knew that its inauguration would draw the colonies closer to the mother country, and thus indefinitely postpone independence. Therefore, in their first manifesto, put forth in 1765, they declared that the colonies could not be represented in Parliament; a year later, Benjamin Franklin, as their spokesman, emphatically asserted that they had never wished for it, did not need it or desire it, and had never asked for it;⁹ and every other prominent Revolutionist gave the same testimony. One alone of all those who have been identified with the Revolutionary propaganda advocated colonial representation, but he was ever opposed to the methods of his colleagues, and stigmatized as "rebels, fools or madmen" those who repudiated Parliamentary control;* he was, in fact, so far as his actions and utterances were concerned, in no sense a Revolutionist. Some British statesmen, among them the "Tory" Grenville, favored colonial representation, and were sincerely desirous of bringing it about; but the British Whigs, following the lead of their transatlantic coadjutors, opposed it and declared it unachievable.¹⁰

Though it is true that the colonists—or, rather, a coterie of their self-appointed spokesmen—sent to the Home Government many petitions—or, more properly, manifestoes, for such, in spirit and meaning, if not in

*James Atis, *Answer to Halifax Libel*, p. 16.

TAXATION, COMMERCE, OPPRESSION

form, they were¹¹—in no case did they offer a basis for a compromise or a settlement of their dispute with the Government. Their claims were vague and indefinite, at one time affirming certain “rights” as constitutionally theirs; at another setting up claims of a different and more advanced character. “No American petitions to the Imperial Government,” wrote a Loyalist in 1775, “have ever yet been rejected, excepting such as were so framed as to compel their rejection on the part of any government that had the least respect, either for the Constitution or for itself.”* Another Loyalist, about the same time, declared that it was the intention of the Revolutionary propagandists to force the Government to concede everything, while they conceded nothing.† So fiercely opposed were they to any form of settlement that left the colonies connected with the mother country with ever so slender a tie, that when, as they were first assembled in Congress, a member of that body proposed the adoption of a carefully-drawn “Plan of Union” with that motherland—a plan that assured to the colonies all the “rights” they had claimed for them—it was rejected with feverish haste, expunged from the minutes, and its proposer ostracised as an enemy to liberty and humanity.¹² Parliament, as one of its members later declared, in reference to the varying claims of the colonists, could not say, “We will grant this, or refuse that, because they ask nothing of us.”‡ They did, indeed, ask nothing but this: That Parliament should lay down all its control over the colonists, and allow them to go their own way unobstructed by any authority save that which they—the Revolutionary propagandists claiming to act in their name—had usurped over them.

*Daniel Leonard, *Massachusettensis, or a Series of Letters*, etc., p. 105.

†Samuel Seabury, *The Congress Canvassed*, p. 26.

‡William Eden, afterwards Lord Auckland, one of the Commissioners sent to the colonies in 1778 on the Conciliatory Commission—words uttered in a debate in Parliament in 1780.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

So far were the governing powers from treating the remonstrances of the colonists with contempt, that all of the acts of the ministry and of Parliament which, at the beginning of the revolutionary agitation, had been denounced as an invasion of their rights, were rescinded; therefore, the grievances thereafter complained of were afterthoughts. "All was granted when you cried for help," wrote a contemporary English pamphleteer.*

But, insists Mr. Roosevelt, "England's treatment of her American subjects was thoroughly selfish. She did not treat her colonists as equals. . . . The rulers of Great Britain, and, to a large extent, its people, looked upon the American colonies as existing primarily for the good of the mother country. . . . They claimed the right to decide for both parties the proportion in which they should pay their shares of the common burdens. The English and Americans were not the subjects of a common sovereign, for the English were themselves the sovereigns, the Americans the subjects."†

That part of Mr. Roosevelt's criticism that refers to the acts of trade and navigation already has been answered, but it may be added that if the enactment of these acts was inspired by "thoroughly selfish" intentions, these intentions were never realized, and the fact—if fact it be—that the British people looked upon the colonists as existing primarily for their benefit did not prevent them from existing primarily and always for their own. And if the rulers of Great Britain and its people did claim the right to decide the proportion of the common burdens to be paid by the colonists, it was a very harmless claim, for it is certain that the colonists never were called upon to pay, and never did pay, any proportion of those common burdens. But it is not true that any such claim was made; it never was proposed or contemplated by the British rulers that the colonists should pay any portion of the common burdens, but, at

*Dean Tucker in *Good Humour, or a Way with the Colonies.*

†*Gouverneur Morris*, American Statesmen Series, pp. 4-6.

TAXATION, COMMERCE, OPPRESSION

most, a share of the expenses of their own establishments.

The remainder of Mr. Roosevelt's indictment is supported by a well-known and highly popular British historian: "The political status of the man of Massachusetts," he writes, "could not be identical with that of the man of Kent, because that of the Kentish man rested on his right of being represented in Parliament and thus sharing in a work of self-government, while the other, from sheer distance, could not exercise such a right." Thereby, he asserts, "The Massachusetts man became the subject of the Kentish man;" and this was "not only serfdom, but the most odious form of serfdom, a subjection to one's fellow-subjects."^{*}

This bears some resemblance to the complaints of James Otis and Benjamin Franklin that English pamphleteers and shoeblacks exulted in the fact that the American colonies were "our colonies." With the sensitiveness of the colonists, who resented the supposed contempt of native Britons, of whom, doubtless, there were some besides Otis and Franklin—mistaken and far-fetched as it might be—one may readily sympathize; but the assertions of Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Green must be met with unqualified dissent.

There is no evidence to show that England did not treat her colonists as equals, or that, in any sense, the English were regarded, or regarded themselves, individually, as the sovereigns, and the Americans as the subjects. It was the *colonies* that were regarded as subordinate, not the *colonists*. It was the Empire that was regarded as sovereign, not a part of its people.

It is true that some two millions and a quarter of the free inhabitants of the American colonies were not directly represented in the Grand Council of the Empire, but more than thrice that number of the inhabitants of Great Britain were not there represented. Moreover, political privileges and incapacities were common and alike to all the subjects of the Empire, British and

*Green's *History of the English People*.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

American, limited alone by geographical lines. Had George Grenville gone to the American colonies, so long as he remained there, he would have been under the same political disabilities with reference to Imperial concerns as was Samuel Adams. Had Samuel Adams gone to Great Britain, so long as he remained there he would have been endowed with the same political privileges as was George Grenville.

It is true, too, that the "man of Kent"—or, rather, one man of Kent out of ten or a dozen men of Kent, or, perhaps, twenty men of Kent—so long as he remained in Kent, or in some other place within the British Isles, had the privilege of voting for members of one branch of the Imperial Parliament; while the man of Massachusetts, so long as he remained in Massachusetts, or in some other place without Great Britain, did not have this privilege. But had they exchanged habitations—lo! the odious serf would have become the sovereign, and the sovereign the odious serf! And this amazing transformation would have been repeated as often as the exchange was made. Suppose that the man of Kent had been a seafarer, voyaging from the port of Gravesend to the port of Boston; the man of Massachusetts engaged in the same occupation, and voyaging from the port of Boston to the port of Gravesend; both of them sailing from these ports at such times as to pass each other on their ways. Then, according to the view taken by Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Green, as often as he reached his journey's end, each of these men would have assumed the political status of a sovereign or a serf, according as his vessel rode in harbor on the east or west shores of the Atlantic. Between these shores neither would have any political status whatever, and they would have been on a political equality only at such times as they met in mid ocean.

Granting that this illustration is absurd, it is not more absurd than Mr. Green's preposterous postulate is false. At least it may serve to emphasize the fact that the subordination of the American colonists—if any subordina-

TAXATION, COMMERCE, OPPRESSION

tion really existed—was in no sense personal, but was a necessary incident to their position as inhabitants of a colony, and could not and did not make them serfs or slaves in any sense, political or social. It *would* have done so, in a measure, had they been an alien people, but could not do so so long as they were acknowledged to be, and what they strenuously claimed to be—at such times as it accorded with their plans to do so—Britons themselves, a claim never denied by British statesmen of any party.

For evidence that the American Revolution was not caused by tyrannical acts of the British ministry or Parliament we do not have to depend on the testimony of British records or the opinion of British historians; we may find it plainly set down in the Revolutionary archives. We find, too, that the truth was admitted, with more or less reserve, by the Revolutionary chiefs. Perhaps the most remarkable of these admissions was that of Washington, who, though at the beginning of the Revolutionary War he had denounced the King as a "tyrant," and his ministers as "diabolical," because they sought to "enslave" the colonists, towards its close asserted that: "Those sentiments which began it [were] founded, not on immediate sufferings, *but on speculative apprehensions of future sufferings*, from the loss of their [the colonists'] liberties."^{*} So it would seem that the tyranny of the King and the diabolism of the ministry, condemned by Washington, were merely speculative tyranny and diabolism.

Some half-century later, Daniel Webster made an assertion somewhat similar to that of Washington. Speaking of the "Revolutionary Fathers," he said: "It was against the recital of an act of Parliament, *rather than against any suffering under its enactment*, that they [the colonists] took up arms. They went to war

**Washington to Joseph Reed*, Feb. 10, 1776; *Washington to John Laurens*, Jan. 15, 1781: *Washington's Writings*, Vol. III., p. 286; Vol. VII., p. 368.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

against a preamble. They fought seven years against a declaration."*

It was of these "speculative apprehensions," so persistently bruited during the agitation preceding the resort to arms, that a distinguished Loyalist wrote: "Are we then to rebel lest there *should* be grievances?"†

But it was neither speculative apprehensions of grievances nor actual grievances that caused the Revolution. The disaffected colonists took up arms, not to preserve their "inalienable rights" under the constitution, but to acquire new, unconstitutional and unheard-of privileges, which, if they had been granted, eventually would have separated the colonies from the motherland as effectually and as completely as they were separated by the act of war. "What is this but independence?" exclaimed a governor of Massachusetts, a native of that colony, commenting on the mildest of these claims.‡ In fact, the *liberty* so clamorously demanded by the Revolutionary propagandists meant *independence*, the two words being synonyms in their vocabulary. "To unite the supremacy of Great Britain with the liberty of America," said one of them, "is utterly impossible."§

Neither minister nor king ever denied to British subjects in America any of the constitutional rights and privileges possessed by British subjects in Great Britain; but they did deny that the former possessed greater rights and privileges than the latter, which in effect, were claimed for them by their disaffected leaders, and which the illustrious Whig statesmen of Great Britain proposed to grant them. And it would seem that, as at the period of the Revolution the inhabitants of the American colonies were in number more than one-third of those in Great Britain, and were increasing by leaps and bounds; were possessed of gigantic natural resources,

*Speech in the United States Senate, May 7, 1834.

†*Massachusettensis Letters*, p. 103.

‡Thomas Hutchinson. Words used in commenting on the utterance of disaffected members of the Provincial Assembly.

§Speech of Samuel Adams, Aug. 1, 1776.

TAXATION, COMMERCE, OPPRESSION

and were situated a thousand leagues away; while the motherland, burdened with enormous debt, was menaced at her very ports by mighty military powers, her hereditary foes; the minister or king—if such there were—who dreamed of reducing them to, and maintaining them in, slavery, must have been made by the gods, not insane, but idiotic. In truth, the only attempt made by the Home Government to coerce the colonies, either by legislation or force of arms, was an attempt to suppress a faction—a numerous one, but still a faction, constituting a party of Disunion—which had made war, not only against the Government, but against such of their fellow colonists—a vast body of intelligent and law-abiding men—who were loyal to it and were entitled to its protection.

The claims of the leaders of this Disunion party, satisfaction of which they demanded of the Home Government as the price of peace, were of the most conflicting character, varying from time to time, as the exigencies of the case required,* but all looking to the goal of independence. The method of argument commonly used by them to prove that the colonies *ought to be* independent, was to assert that *they were and always had been* independent, the sole bond of union between them and the motherland being an allegiance owing to the same sovereign. Using this assertion as a premise, the conclusion was easily arrived at, being the same.

The first settlers of America, they declared, left the realm of England and went into a foreign country, where they found no existing laws, and therefore made laws for themselves, having carried with them the power of making such laws, and being out of the jurisdiction of Parliament. They did not carry with them the laws of the land, they insisted; no union, such as that between England and Scotland, had ever been formed between Britain and the colonies; but each of them, as well as Great Britain, had separate and inde-

**A Letter of a Virginian to the Members of the Congress, etc., pp. 23-25 passim.* Bryan Fairfax to Washington, July, 1774: *Writings, Vol. II., p. 392.*

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

pendent legislatures. "England is a dominion itself and has no dominion," wrote one of them. They were dependent on the King alone.*

The colonies could not be a part of the British Empire, they asserted, because the British Government was not an empire. Nor were they a part of the British realm or state. That, in fact, the colonies and Great Britain were "distinct states," united under one king, in his natural, not his political capacity.† Therefore, as remarked a loyalist writer, the King was "King of Massachusetts, King of Rhode Island, King of Connecticut, etc., etc.;"‡ king of fifteen petty states, including Nova Scotia and the Province of Quebec; besides being King of Great Britain and Ireland.

Pd. These declarations were put forth with the greatest energy and publicity in the early part of 1775, but nearly a decade before that time, three of the Disunion leaders—Joseph Hawley, of Massachusetts; Richard Bland, of Virginia; and Benjamin Franklin—had advanced a similar doctrine. The latter, in his *Political Observations*, published in 1766, wrote: "Writers against the colonies all bewilder themselves by supposing the colonies *within* the realm, which is not the case, nor ever was. . . . The American settlers needed no exemption from the power of Parliament, they were necessarily exempt as soon as they landed out of its jurisdiction."§

Later, Franklin, in a letter to his son, amplified this doctrine, but, as was his habit when writing to that gentleman, expressed it with more caution. "The more I have thought and read on the subject," he wrote, "the more I find myself confirmed in opinion that no middle doctrine can well be maintained; I mean, not clearly with intelligent arguments. Something might be made

*Benjamin Franklin, *Writings*, Vol. IV., pp. 216-218, 271, 282, 284, 289.

†John Adams, *Novanglus: Works*, pp. 106, 107, 113, 114.

‡*Massachusetts Letters*, p. 86.

§Franklin's *Writings*, Vol. IV., pp. 216-218.

TAXATION, COMMERCE, OPPRESSION

of either of the extremes: that Parliament has a power to make *all laws* for us, or that it has a power to make *no laws* for us; and *I think the arguments for the latter more numerous and weighty.* Supposing that doctrine established, *the colonies would then be so many separate states, only subject to the same king.*"*

Again, in 1770, Franklin wrote: "The colonies originally were constituted distinct states, and intended to be continued such. . . . Since that period the Parliament here has usurped an authority of making laws for them."†

Such were the fundamental claims of the Disunionists. Under such a *régime* the political status of the colonies would have been a curious one. Had King George—a constitutional sovereign in Great Britain—been king of these fifteen separate and distinct states, having no ministers therein to intervene between himself and his subjects, either he would have been an autocrat or a non-entity. For example, if he had had the power of declaring war and making peace, he could have compelled one or more of his petty states to wage war upon another or others of them that had incurred his displeasure; even with the mother country by whose laws he was bound. On the other hand, if their legislatures had that power, any one or more of them equally could have waged war upon another or others of them, while their king would have been obliged to stand by and see two bodies of his subjects slaughtering one another. In either case there would have been seen the absurd spectacle of a people fighting for and against their liege lord at one and the same time.

But it is easy to see that, whatever might have been the power of the king in theory, actually he would have had the power of a doge of Venice diluted by three thousand miles of ocean, and the colonies would have been independent states, which was the result that the Dis-

*Letter dated March 13, 1768: *Writings*, Vol. VII., pp. 391, 392.

†Letter to Samuel Cooper, June 8, 1770: *Writings*, Vol. VII., p. 476.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

union chiefs were laboring to bring about, peaceably if they could, forcibly if they must. It has been seen that their ultimatum was the concession to the Imperial Government of the power of regulating their commerce, a concession tendered as a favor, and which could be withdrawn at any time the colonial assemblies chose to do so.

A singular status for colonies! The only bond of union with the motherland being the recognition of her right, temporarily conceded, to regulate their commerce, subject to revision and repeal by the colonial assemblies. This, virtually, was the alternative proposed by the Disunion leaders to the Home Government as the sole means of averting a revolution. It is difficult to discern the "perfidy" and "wrong-headedness" of the King, and the "crass and brutal stupidity" of his ministers, alleged by Mr. Roosevelt,¹³—and, in varying terms, by many other writers, British and American—to be properly applicable to that King and those ministers for refusing to avail themselves of such an alternative.¹⁴

But if these claims of the Disunion leaders had been constantly adhered to, they could not, at least, be charged with inconsistency. But they were not adhered to; they were constantly setting up other and diverse claims, utterly inconsistent with them. The very men who claimed to be citizens of states wholly unconnected with Great Britain persistently and continuously asserted their "rights" *under the British constitution*,¹⁵ as if the people of one independent state could have any "rights" under the constitution of another! As well might an Englishman assert his right to be governed by the laws of Denmark or Jutland. To make confusion more confounded, these men, who vehemently denied that the colonies had any connection with the British Parliament and ministry, on the one hand, sent to them petitions; on the other, arrogated to themselves the right to veto their laws, laws in no way affecting them or their respective states.¹⁶ One of them—the foremost in setting up these pretensions—perhaps outdid this absurdity; he

TAXATION, COMMERCE, OPPRESSION

complained that the British Government had ceded to another power land settled by "a private countryman of ours," which "*but for that cession might have remained in our* [that is, the colonies'] *possession.*" That is to say, though Great Britain could not lawfully hold colonies, her colonies could.

The Home Government did not make war upon the colonists; the malcontent colonists made war upon the Home Government,¹⁷ arresting and maltreating its officials, capturing and wounding its naval officers, pillaging its military stores, storming one of its fortresses, entangling its soldiers in a skilfully planned ambuscade and forcing a conflict of arms before any attack was made upon them by the Government troops, and before any one of the insurgent marauders or their instigators had been in any way molested.¹⁸

The Disunionists made war upon the Home Government long prior to the so-called "Battle of Lexington," at which all American writers assert that the British were the aggressors, which assertion, in spite of Disunion affidavits, is untrue. Not only is the contrary asserted in the report of the British commander, and in the letters of his subordinate officers, but the attending circumstances show it to be very improbable, indeed impossible, consistent with the sanity of the leaders of the royal forces.¹⁹

The Disunionists made war upon the Home Government, and in so doing they did not, as so often has been falsely asserted, believe that they were undertaking a difficult or a dangerous enterprise. As early as 1769, five years before the passage of the coercion acts by Parliament, Samuel Adams, the chief organizer of the Disunion party and its despotic leader, had written:

"When I consider the corruption of Great Britain; their load of debt; their intestine divisions, tumults and riots; their scarcity of provisions and the contempt in which they are held by the nations about them; and when I consider, on the other hand, the state of the American colonies with regard to the various climates, soils,

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

produce, rapid population, joined to the virtue of the inhabitants, I cannot but think that the conduct of Old England towards us may be permitted by Divine Wisdom, and ordained by the unsearchable Providence of the Almighty, for hastening a period dreadful to Great Britain." Several years later, after hostilities had begun, he predicted the speedy destruction of Great Britain—"corrupt," sunk under "a load of debt," plagued with "intestine divisions," and held in contempt by the nations around her.*

Long before either of these predictions was made by Samuel Adams, we find his cousin and chief coadjutor, John Adams, commenting, seemingly with satisfaction, on the weakness of Great Britain and the power of France—with a far-seeing eye, we may hazard a guess, to an eventual alliance with that nation. And on the eve of the first important conflict with the British troops we find him adding his testimony to the incapacity and impotence of Great Britain. "We know that the nation is loaded with debts and taxes by the folly and iniquity of its ministers, and that without the trade of America it can neither long support its fleet and army nor pay the interest of its debt."†

The belief expressed by John Adams that Great Britain was dependent on the colonies for its standing among the nations was a very common one with the Disunionists. "America," said George Wythe, one of the delegates from Virginia to the Second Continental Congress, "is one of the wings upon which the British eagle has soared to the skies."‡

From that time until the war for independence was far advanced the story of "Britain's fading glory" was told in the pulpit, from the rostrum, in the press, dis-

*Published in the *Boston Gazette*, March 18, 1769, and uttered in a speech delivered August 1, 1776.

†John Adams' *Works*, Vol. II., pp. 109, 110; Vol. IV., p. 37.

‡John Adams' *Abstract of Debates in the Second Congress: Works*, Vol. II., p. 479.

TAXATION, COMMERCE, OPPRESSION

played in handbills and sung in doggerel verse in every town and village in the thirteen colonies.

Not a little to foster this belief was uttered by the British Whig orators and writers, who never tired of proclaiming the decadence and impotence of their country. "Its meridian was past." Its people were "not fit to govern themselves," and "must submit to their political old age, weakness and infirmity." Burke, Rockingham, Richmond, and other "friends of America" of less note, vied with each other in lamenting the impending decay of the land of their birth and habitation, and rejoicing that, as soon as it became unfit for the home of freemen, they would be able to find a refuge in the colonies, soon to become independent republics, and in France, that happy land of Bastiles.²⁰

Furthermore, the Disunion leaders were assured of the active co-operation and assistance of a large number of the people of England other than the illustrious "friends of America" who had encouraged and abetted them in their opposition to the Government. During the latter part of 1774, Josiah Quincy visited England as an emissary of the Disunion chiefs. From there he wrote: "I came among a people, I was told, that breathed nothing but punishment and destruction against Boston and all America. I found a people many of whom revere, love and heartily wish well to us. . . . I am assured, and as I verily believe, could the voices of this nation be collected by any fair method, twenty to one would be in favor of the Americans."*

This condition was well known to the Disunion chiefs. A few weeks later John Adams wrote: "We know that the people of Great Britain are not united against us.

. . . We are assured by thousands of letters from persons of good intelligence, by the general strain of publications in public papers, pamphlets and magazines, and by some larger works written for posterity, that the body of the people are friends of America, and wish us

*John Quincy to Mrs. Quincy, Nov. 24, 1774: *Life of Josiah Quincy, Jr.*

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

success in our struggles against the claims of Parliament and Administration. We know that millions in England and Scotland will think it unrighteous, impolitic and ruinous to make war upon us. . . . We know that many of the most virtuous and independent of the nobility and gentry are for us."*

A few months later, Charles Dumas, a paid emissary of the Congress, wrote of these "friends of America" in England: "There exists and gathers strength a great body which regards the cause of the Americans as its own, their safety and liberty as its own, which will prefer to see them independent rather than subjected; . . . the basis of this party is already forty peers and one hundred and fifty members of the Commons."†

For the further comfort of the leaders of the intended rebellion, they were informed that "the whole [British] army, native and foreign, is averse to the service." That at the first hint of a war against the colonists "a vast number of the best subaltern officers have quitted the service." That in the ranks there is "not one in five that is a soldier; the rest are boys and debilitated manufacturers." That it was "impossible to recruit in England, Ireland or Scotland," and that "the English and Irish troops go with infinite reluctance, and strong guards are obliged to be kept upon the transports to keep them from deserting by wholesale;" and, therefore, if proper encouragement be given them by the Congress upon landing upon the shores of America, "multitudes will desert." That, in short, if the British forces should go through one campaign, and "hazard an engagement" with those of the colonies, it will exhaust their resources, and it is "hardly possible" that they can "stand another." For "the ministry have done their utmost in fitting out the armament, and that if it fails they cannot find means next year to go on with the war."²¹

*John Adams' *Works*, Vol. IV., p. 37.

†*Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, Vol. II., p. 110.

TAXATION, COMMERCE, OPPRESSION

To fill full the measure of the confidence of the Disunion leaders in the ultimate success in their contest with the feeble power of Britain, they had the assurance of receiving the aid of France. "How many ships can Britain spare? Let her send all the ships she has round her island; *what if her ill-natured neighbors, France and Spain, should strike a blow in their absence?*" asked Adams in the early part of 1775. "Is it the interest of France to stand neutral? . . . Is it not her interest to dismember the British Empire?"* again he asked, a year later.

In fact, before these words were uttered, the French Government had decided to give secret aid to the revolting colonists in their projected war against Great Britain. By a secret covenant with the Congress, the King agreed to supply them with money, munitions and other necessaries of war. In one respect, however, Mr. Adams was mistaken. The bounty of France was not afforded to enable the colonies to throw off their dependence on Great Britain, but rather to cripple the power both of Great Britain and her colonies.²²

But whatever might be the motive of France for giving that aid, the Disunion Leaders were assured of receiving it, in secret, at first, but with confidence that soon an open alliance would follow. And then, as wrote one of them in triumph, "when France moves, Spain will co-operate," and then England "must submit to whatever terms they please to impose, for she is totally incapable of sustaining a war with France." Then they had but to "announce the independency of the United States of North America," and Great Britain must acknowledge it and "court our friendship, or hazard the chance of ceasing to be a nation."[†]

But suppose the unsupposable! Suppose that Great

*John Adams' *Works*, Vol. IV., p. 40; Vol. II., p. 488.

†A. Lee to the Committee of Secret Correspondence, June 3, 1776; A. Lee to Dumas, July 6, 1776; Silas Deane to the Committee of Secret Correspondence, Dec. 1, 1776; *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, Vol. II., pp. 95, 99, 207.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Britain should show unexpected strength! Suppose, after all, her people are "united against us!" Are the colonies prepared for the shock? Certainly they are, asserted John Adams. "It is not so easy a thing for the most powerful state to conquer a country a thousand leagues off." But "have you arms and ammunition? I answer, we have, but if we had not, we could make a sufficient quantity of both. What should hinder? We have many manufacturers of firearms now whose arms are as good as any in the world. Powder has been made here and may be again, and so may saltpetre; what should hinder? We have all the materials in great abundance, and the process is very simple. But if we neither had them nor could make them, we could import them. . . . In a land war this continent might defend itself against all the world."*

So when the Disunion leaders, in the name of the colonists, flung down the gage of battle before the British Government, giving it the choice of taking it up or relinquishing all control over and connection with them, they went into the contest with light hearts.

*John Adams' *Works*, Vol. IV., pp. 36, 39, 40, 41, *passim*.

CHAPTER III.

INDIANS, HESSIANS, AND BRITISH BARBARITY.

THE alliance of the British Government with the American Indians, as said Lord North, was "unavoidable." It was made unavoidable by the Disunionists, who had stirred up their passions and prepared them for war. From a very early period of the struggle, before the first conflict in arms, until the war was far advanced, with repeated importunities, they had urged them to take the warpath and join them in their intended attack on the Home Government; to "whet their hatchet;"¹ to "ambush" British soldiers,² and to capture them at so much per head like herds of wild cattle.³ Immediately thereafter they paused in their zeal for an alliance with their red-skinned brothers to invoke the indignation of humanity against the barbarous British for inciting to attack them the merciless savages, "whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions."⁴ But a few days' breathing time sufficed to enable them again to provide for the enlistment of their hoped-for savage auxiliaries; for on the 8th of July, by another resolution, the Congress empowered General Washington to engage the services of the Penobscot, St. John's and Nova Scotia Indians.* After three weeks again they paused to protest against the "wild and barbarous savages of the wilderness" being employed by the British.⁵

Not only did the Disunionists endeavor to engage the Indians in their service, but they actually engaged them.

**Secret Journal of the Congress*, July 8, 1776, p. 47.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

They had them among the "Minute Men" at Lexington, with their troops at Bunker Hill, at the siege of Boston, at Long Island and at White Plains, at which places the Indians busily employed themselves in killing "regulars."⁶ After that time but little effort was made by the Disunionists to entice them into their service, the confidence and affection they had for their British protectors making the attempt of little avail. Perhaps, too, the Congress at length saw the inexpediency of attempting to do themselves that which they had charged the British with having done and invoked the wrath of Heaven upon them for the doing.

What are the facts? As has been said, Indians were engaged with the "Minute Men" when the attack was made upon the British at Lexington. This was the 19th of April, 1775. At that time, and during that year and the next, they fought side by side with the white soldiers in the Revolutionary army. It was before that time, on the 4th of April, 1775, that the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts solicited the alliance of the Six Nations, with the result that a small part of them, belonging to outlying tribes, joined them. It was not until the 5th of July of that year that the first hint was given of the intent of the ministry to accept the alliance of the Indians of the Six Nations, the reason for the proposal being that the insurgents already had engaged them in arms.⁷ Before that time the Indian superintendents had been instructed to keep the Indians neutral.⁸ In November, 1775, Lord North assured the House that "*there was never any idea of employing the negroes or the Indians until the Americans themselves had first applied to them.*"*

But even then the measures taken by the Home Government to engage the Indians were merely tentative. It was not until several months after the Declaration of Independence, that called down the wrath of Heaven upon the British for allying themselves with the Indians, that any actual means were used for employing them. So in

**Parliamentary History*, Vol. XVIII., p. 994.

INDIANS, HESSIANS, BRITISH BARBARITY

this, as in other respects, that immortal document is not quite trustworthy. Even a year later, when Chatham uttered his thundering invective against the ministers for having "dared to authorize and associate to our arms the tomahawk and the scalping-knife of the savage," the Indians had been actively engaged under British command but three months, while those barbarous implements of war had been "associated to" the arms of the insurgents for two years and a half.

But Mr. Roosevelt, in his *The Winning of the West*, slighting the persistent and long-continued attempts of the Disunionists to induce the Indians to make war upon the British; suppressing the conclusive documentary evidence that Guy Johnson and John Stuart, the Indian Superintendents for the Northern and Southern Districts, by the direction of the Home Government, used their influence with the Indians to prevent their breaking the peace; asserts that: "Soon after the conflict with the revolted colonists became one of arms as well as of opinion, *the British began to rouse the Indian tribes to take their part;*" one of which "promptly took up arms at the bidding of the British."* Furthermore, Mr. Roosevelt so confuses the facts, by detailing a long series of conflicts between the settlers and the Indian tribes on the west and south-west border lands—most of which conflicts were the result of the indignation of those tribes at the barbarous murders of the families of Logan and other Indian chiefs by Great-house and Cresap, afterwards officers in the Revolutionary army—as to make it appear that these conflicts were organized attacks on the colonists under the supervision of the British Government; and then adds, with a fine assumption of candor: "Our skirts are not quite clear in the matter, after all, for we more than once showed a tendency to bid for their [the Indians'] support."† I should say *we did!*

One may well wonder how Mr. Roosevelt is able to

**The Winning of the West*, Vol. I., pp. 276, 277.

†*Ibid.*, Vol. I., pp. 272-279, *passim*.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

reconcile such a method of recital with his well-known honesty.

Mr. Roosevelt, too, affects to give credence to the oft-repeated and sufficiently refuted tales of the barbarity of the British Government, or its emissaries, in inciting the Indians to murder the settlers by paying for their scalps. But though he denounces the British Government, "the Crown and the ruling classes," as "participants in these crimes," and asserts that "they urged on hordes of savages to slaughter men, women and children;" "hired them to murder non-combatants as well as soldiers, and paid for each life of any sort that was taken;" yet he confines the attempt to prove the allegation of "scalp-buying" to the settlement at Detroit, its governor and his subordinates. Of Governor Hamilton he says, in one page of his book, there is no "direct evidence that he himself paid out money for scalps," and that "he always endeavored to get war parties to bring in prisoners, and behaved well to the captives;" on another, that "he undoubtedly heartily approved of" the orders of his superiors—these same "Crown and ruling classes" who committed the crimes aforesaid—"and executed them with eager zest."*

However this may puzzle the reader, it is plain that Mr. Roosevelt accuses this British governor and his subordinates—if no other—of being guilty of these horrible crimes: "*Scalps were certainly bought and paid for at Detroit,*" he writes; and in support of this accusation cites the Haldimand MSS., which contain nothing that sustains the truth of the indictment; the account of the missionary John Heckewelder, which I have not examined, but see no reason to believe contains any proof of such a charge; an "etc." and from the *American Pioneer* "a very curious account of an Indian who, by dividing a large scalp into two, got fifty dollars for each half." A curious account, indeed, and one that Mr. Roosevelt, acquainted as he must be with the character

**The Winning of the West*, Vol. II., pp. 3, 4, 87.

INDIANS, HESSIANS, BRITISH BARBARY

of the tales told in that periodical, should have had the grace to ignore.⁹

One wrong committed is no excuse for the committal of another, but Mr. Roosevelt, even if he believed these stories, might have paused from his denunciation of the British Government for the alleged crime of buying scalps to give an account of the acts of some other governments, or rather legislatures, among them those of Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Virginia and South Carolina, that undoubtedly did buy scalps, not only of Indians, but of Frenchmen, as their own archives prove. And, as Mr. Roosevelt is fond of "curious accounts," here is one to the point to be found in the *Pennsylvania Archives* (Vol. III., p. 109). In a letter to the Governor of Maryland the writer complains: "Here are now twenty scalps hanging out to publick view, which are well known to have been made out of five Frenchmen killed." Not that the writer objected to the scalping of Frenchmen, or even to the fraudulent multiplication of their scalplocks; what he did object to was that the bounty for the scalps had been paid to Indians, and not to his enterprising fellow provincials.*

The fact is that the stories told during the Revolutionary War of bounties paid for scalps by British officers was but a survival of the then well-remembered fact that not only had such bounties been paid by the colonial legislatures, but in some instances by the state legislatures¹⁰ after independence had been declared.

Perhaps Mr. Roosevelt should be praised for his forbearance in omitting from his citation of *proofs* that British officers engaged in this diabolical traffic, the "curious account" written by Franklin, relating, with the minutest detail, the circumstances of an alleged transmission of a bale of scalps of men, women and children by a British officer as a voucher for sums paid out. This libel, since its falsity was exposed beyond

*See Kidder's *Captain John Lovewell*, pp. 11, 12; *Pennsylvania Colonial Records*, Vol. IX., pp. 141, 189; Force's *American Archives* (Fifth Series), Vol. III., p. 33.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

question, American writers have been fond of styling a "hoax"; but its author by no means intended it as a hoax, but to disseminate the belief among the peoples of Europe that the British Government was capable of acts that would have shamed Timour or Attila. The attempt was successful; for many years it was believed, not only in Europe, but by Americans, several of whose writers embodied it in their "histories" as a fact.¹¹

The Indians never were of any service to the British arms. Burgoyne, who was the only British general with whom they were associated in any great force, declared that to his army they were "little more than a name." He considered them "at best, a necessary evil."^{*} It is probable that Burgoyne, who was more conspicuous for his qualities as a humanitarian than a leader of men, entirely misunderstood the Indian character and was incapable of inspiring them with respect. It would seem, too, that, fearing excesses, he attempted to force them to adopt European methods of warfare, and the restraint was unbearable to them. At any rate, he acquired so little control over them that they deserted his army at a time when their services would have been of great value to it, and left it to meet conditions for which it was entirely unfitted.

It has been said that the alliance of the British Government with the Indians was unavoidable. It was more than unavoidable, it was a measure of humanity. For had not their alliance been accepted they would have taken the warpath in revenge for the barbarous outrages committed upon them by the colonial backwoodsmen; in which event they could not have been controlled. In no case would they have remained neutral. Said Governor Pownall, "a warm and zealous friend of the colonies": "The idea of Indian neutrality is nonsense—delusive, dangerous nonsense!"[†] Washington, too, declared that it would be impossible to keep them in a

*Burgoyne to Lord George Germaine, July 11, 1778: *Parliamentary Register*, Vol. IX., p. 218.

†Words uttered by Pownall in a debate in the House of Commons, Feb. 6, 1776. 58

INDIANS, HESSIANS, BRITISH BARBARITY

state of neutrality, and, therefore, from the beginning of hostilities, continued to urge the colonies to employ them in the Revolutionary armies.¹² All practical means were adopted by the British commanders to restrain their Indian allies from excesses and to confine their field of action to as small an area as possible. In fact, very little fighting was done by them during the Revolutionary War other than in defending themselves against attacks on their villages by the Disunion forces. The alliance was useful because, to a great extent, it restrained them from excesses which they might have committed both on friend and foe. The excesses they did commit during the Revolutionary War were slight compared with those committed by them before and after that event. They have been enormously exaggerated by American writers, who have accepted as true the idle tales disseminated by rumor, repeated and amplified by those interested in defaming the British Government and its officers. These excesses were prompted not only by the memory of outrages perpetrated against themselves and their families by the settlers on the border lands, but by injuries done to them by the Disunion troops during the war.* Perhaps some excuse might be allowed to these poor, untutored savages for presuming to suppose that that which was justice for the red man equally was justice for the white; if their homes were laid in ashes and their wives and little ones slaughtered, that it was but right that the homes and families of their white assailants should be similarly dealt with. It should be remembered that the rule of *lex talionis* once prevailed among a more favored race than theirs and was not considered an unjust one. It ought to be remembered, too, that the honor of women was never violated during their raids.¹³ They were sometimes cruel, but never bestial.

As says Mr. Stone: "Their spoilers have been their historians." They were "loaded with execrations for

*See letter quoted by Stone in *The Border Wars*, Vol. I., pp. 350, 351.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

atrocities of which all were alike innocent, because the deeds recorded were never committed; it having been the policy of the public writers, and those in authority, not only to magnify actual occurrences, *but sometimes, when these were wanting, to draw upon their imaginations for accounts of such deeds of ferocity as might best serve to keep alive the strongest feelings of indignation against the parent country*, and likewise induce the people to take the field for revenge."*

The fact is that during the whole seven years of the Revolutionary War but two outrages of any magnitude can be charged against the Indians—the attacks on the settlements at Wyoming and Cherry Valley. And these incidents, especially the first named, have been distorted out of all semblance to the truth.¹⁴ The alleged perpetrator of both these outrages, proclaimed to the world in chronicle and verse as a monster in human form, in fact was a brave and honorable man, of high ideals, whose acts might have put to shame those of some of his pale-faced foes. This was the great war-chief of the Six Nations, with whom an honorable alliance was formed by the British Government; honorable because under his command it was reasonable to suppose that the Indians could be prevented from the commission of cruel and barbarous acts.

These Six Nations were not the bloodthirsty roamers of the forest they are generally supposed to have been, but were well started on the course of civilization, living in well-built houses, and cultivating extensive and productive fields and orchards, under the supervision of respected and beloved British instructors.†

The affection of these Indians for their British protectors was increased by the contrast between the treatment they received from them and that which they received from the colonists, especially from the ruf-

**Border Wars of the Revolution*, Preface, p. vi.

†See Franklin's *Writings*, Vol. IV., p. 54, *et seq.*, for a eulogy of the men of the Six Nations and an account of the cruelties perpetrated upon them.

INDIANS, HESSIANS, BRITISH BARBARITY

fianly backwoodsmen, who had driven them from their ancient hunting-grounds, cheated them out of their inheritance, supplied them with the fiery liquor that made them savages indeed, and without provocation and in cold blood had murdered their wives and children. "A succession of outrages, unprovoked, and more cruel than savages," says Mr. Stone. The cause of there being so many "bad Indians" is to be found in the acts of the "reprobate Indian traders," the "land-jobbers," and their like, who infested the border lands, and who, as Washington asserted, held that there was "no crime at all in killing an Indian."*

The employment of war bands of Indians to fight the white man's battles was no new thing. The colonists had used them at every opportunity, not only against other tribes, but against the French. The French allies of the Revolutionists might pertinently have asked with what justice they branded as infamous the employment of Indians by the British against the colonists, since the colonists had never hesitated to employ them against them (the French). As to their practice of scalping, they might have pointed to the acts of the provincial assemblies that gave rewards for the scalps torn from the heads of their friends and relatives. The colonists had always done this; they had done so during the Canadian campaign against Quebec until forbidden by the express order of General Wolfe, when, for the remainder of the campaign, they confined their operations to the skulls of the red men.† There is a curious instance of this practice noticed in one of Washington's letters. While he was in command of an expedition against the French and Indians, in 1776, one "Mr. Paris," in charge of a raiding party, met and defeated a small band of the enemy, whose commander, "Monsieur Donville," was killed and scalped. The scalp was sent to

*Washington to David Humphreys, July 20, 1791: *Writings*, Vol. X., p. 172.

†Parkman's *Montcalm and Wolfe* (early edition), Vol. III., p. 63.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Colonel Washington "by Jenkins," and Washington, in a letter to the Governor of Virginia, expressed a hope that, "although it is not an Indian's, they [the raiding party] will meet with an adequate reward,"*—which it is to be hoped they did.

Perhaps a little much-needed light might have been thrown on the colonial question if, when Lord Chatham was inveighing against the unspeakable barbarity of employing against the colonists savages who made use of the "scalping-knife" against their enemies—"roasting and eating them,"¹⁵ his Lordship added—if some noble lord had been well enough informed to have told him, not only that these barbarous *cannibals* had been employed in the armies of his friends the insurgents against his countrymen some four months before the ministry had even proposed to do so, but that the use of the scalping-knife had been a common practice with them, and that only a few years before their commander-in-chief had deemed it worthy of praise and reward.

The employment of alien mercenary auxiliaries cannot be justified, even though the necessity was great. The only plea that can be offered is that it was the custom of the age. But though that plea is bad as against a protest in the name of humanity, it is good as against the protests of the British Whig supporters of the revolting colonists, for alien troops had been employed, even in England, under their administration, and the most illustrious of all the Whigs, the staunchest of the "friends of America," who had thundered the loudest against the use of "Hessians" against the insurrectionists in America, had proposed to employ twenty thousand of them against a possible insurrection of "Roman Catholics" in Ireland.¹⁶ Then, too, these friends of America, by opposing with incessant clamor the enlistment of troops in England, had made it impossible to place an adequate army of native levies in the

*Washington to Governor Dinwiddie, April 7, 1756: Washington's *Writings*, Vol. II., pp. 136, 137.

INDIANS, HESSIANS, BRITISH BARBARTY

field, and so had made themselves a party to the employment of aliens.¹⁷

That some outrages were committed by British soldiers and their German auxiliaries in America during the Revolutionary War it would be foolish to doubt; no war has been without such examples. But it is certain that they were in no way comparable with those perpetrated by European troops in the Old World in the wars of the same and succeeding generation. Most of the charges of cruelty brought against British officers and soldiers—especially during the first two years of the war—were fabricated by the Disunionists for the double purpose of inflaming the passions of the colonists against the British Government and people, and at the same time arousing the sympathies of that people and the peoples of other European nations. For similar reasons, as baseless, or nearly as baseless, charges were brought against the civil and military authorities of the Southern Confederacy during the American civil war, charges that resulted in the judicial murder of at least one man.¹⁸ The charges of cruelty, too, brought against British officers gave a much-needed excuse to the Disunionists for their inhuman treatment of their Loyalist fellow-countrymen, and even of some of their British prisoners-of-war; thus, as wrote Governor Gage, “founding barbarity upon falsehood.”¹⁹ The most definite of these charges brought against the British of cruelty to their prisoners, in fact, rest chiefly upon the testimony of a backwoods swashbuckler, whose self-told adventures, without the alteration of a word, would be appropriate for the pages of Baron Munchausen; one who plotted treason against his old associates and was ready to join his fortunes with the British, whom he had accused of tyranny and barbarity;²⁰ and upon one who, in after years, confessed to having committed perjury for the benefit of his party.²¹

The charges brought against British officers of burning defenceless towns in defiance of the laws of nations are as unfounded as those of cruelty to prisoners of

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

war. These towns—rather villages or hamlets—that were burned by the British, were destroyed in accordance with the law of war, they being used by the insurgent troops, in defiance of that law, as bases for attacks upon British troops. The suggestion to burn New York, made by Washington and strongly advocated by General Greene and John Jay, if perpetrated, would have been an act of a more questionable character, as that city had not been in the possession of the enemy and was inhabited by a peaceful population who had made no resistance to its occupation by the insurgent army, and had molested it in no way.²² But even this would have been a legitimate act of war in comparison with the plan devised by Silas Deane—winked at, if not specially sanctioned, by Benjamin Franklin—to burn the cities of Bristol and Portsmouth by means of hired incendiaries. The execution of both these plans was attempted, the former without the connivance or consent of Washington, however; the actual perpetrator of the latter paying the penalty of his crime upon the scaffold.²³

That some acts of cruelty were committed by the Loyalists also is true; but in strong mitigation of these acts may be pleaded the fact that they were done in retaliation for gross and inhuman persecution, outrage and insult, of many years' duration, which they had endured with singular patience and fortitude, making reprisals only after being driven from their homes and hunted like beasts of the forest.

CHAPTER IV.

THE INSURGENT TROOPS AND THEIR ALLIES.

THE claim that "insurgent husbandmen" overcame battalions of British veterans on an equal field, and won—or could have won—their independence unaided by any military or naval power, is not only false but silly. Scarcely would it be exceeded in absurdity were a chronicler of the wars of Napoleon to assert that the armies of his marshals were driven from the Peninsula and the King restored to his throne by the single prowess of the peasant guerillas of Spain. Had the people of the thirteen colonies actually been "of one mind" in opposition to the Home Government and in a determination to become independent; had they been inspired with that impassioned devotion of patriotism with which they have been credited, and had banded together in an earnest endeavor to overthrow Imperial control, it ought not to be doubted that they would have succeeded in the attempt without foreign assistance. But no such conditions existed. Instead of being of one mind, the colonists were divided into parties for and against the Government, nearly equal in numbers, and inexorably opposed in sentiment. After the first fervor of insurrection had subsided, even before serious hostilities had begun, among the Disunionists, instead of "devoted patriotism," "egregious want of public spirit" reigned.* So great had been the dearth of recruits, even in the very centre of disaffection, that it had been found necessary to enlist negroes (slave as well as free),

*Washington to the President of Congress, Nov. 28, 1775:
Washington's *Writings*, Vol. III., pp. 175, 176.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

boys unable to bear arms, old men unfit to endure the fatigues of the campaign, and deserters from the British ranks,¹ the latter being enticed away for that purpose. Though the Disunionists had been loud in invective against the Government, violent and cruel in their resentment against such of their fellow colonists as refused to be dominated by them and claimed the right to have opinions of their own, they were by no means eager to uphold their convictions in the field of war. "When I look around," wrote the adjutant-general of the Revolutionary army, shortly after the first contest in the field, "and see how few of the numbers who talked so loudly of death and honor are around me, I am lost in wonder.

. . . Your noisy sons of liberty are, I find, the quietest on the field."^{*} "When they so boldly dared Great Britain every man was then a bold patriot, felt himself equal to the contest, and seemed to wish for an opportunity of evincing his prowess," a little later wrote a high official of the federated colonies, "but now, when we are fairly engaged, when death and ruin stare us in the face, and when nothing but the most intrepid courage can rescue us from contempt and disgrace, sorry am I to say it, many of those who were foremost in noise shrink coward-like from the danger, and are begging pardon without striking a blow."[†]

Such men as these, when persuaded or hired to enlist, made but indifferent soldiers. The last-named method was found to be essential; for, as Washington discovered at an early period of the war, "there must be some other stimulus, besides love for their country, to make men fond of the service";[‡] that stimulus, he declared, must take the form of ample pay. But even this was not enough to rouse the slumbering patriotism

**Life of Joseph Reed*, Vol. I., p. 231.

†Robert Morris to the Commissioners at Paris, Dec. 21, 1776: *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, Vol. II., pp. 235, 236.

‡Washington to the President of Congress, Nov. 19, 1775: *Washington's Writings*, Vol. III., p. 165.

INSURGENT TROOPS AND THEIR ALLIES

of the revolting colonists, and, as a last device, conscription was resorted to. For these and other causes the army of the Revolution was never an effective one.

The militia (recruited with those "insurgent husbandmen," upon whom Mr. Bancroft bestows the palm of victory), according to the testimony of many of the civil and military officers of the federated colonies—among them the commander-in-chief—and that of the officers of the army of their allies, were but carpet warriors, mere "useless hands and mouths," more hurtful than serviceable to the cause in which they were engaged. In the camp they were "impatient and ungovernable," given to "shameful and scandalous desertions;" when apprehensive of attack by the enemy, "going off, in some instances, almost by whole regiments, by half ones and by companies at a time;" at other times, apt to remain in their quarters, consuming the provisions, "till they are properly equipped," and then depart, "and by that means plunder the public." In the field, they were "timid and ready to fly from their own shadows," and generally "ran away without firing a single gun," or, at best, "fled at the first fire." Their officers, we are told, were "generally of the lowest class of people," who, instead of setting a good example to their men, led them into every kind of mischief, especially that of "plundering the inhabitants under the pretence of their being Tories." Therefore, it is not surprising that Washington should declare that to place dependence upon them "is assuredly resting on a broken staff;" and, at the end of five years' experience as their commander, should assert that such a dependence would be "fatal," having "never yet been witness to a single instance that can justify a different opinion."²

Among the regular, or so-called "Continental" troops, better but by no means ideal conditions prevailed. Though they, too, were infected by the spirit of desertion to an "amazing" and "astonishingly great" extent; though they, too, were plunderers of friend as well as foe; though they were "riotous," "licentious"

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

and mutinous to an alarming extent; though, for a long period, they could not be brought to "march boldly up to a work, nor stand exposed in a plain;" though they, too, were liable to be seized by panics, and, on one occasion, two New England brigades accomplished the remarkable feat of running away from sixty or seventy of the enemy's men, most of their officers showing them the example; though many of their officers practised "low, dirty arts," and some of them were "not fit to be shoeblocks;" yet, by means of the indefatigable perseverance of their commander-in-chief, aided by trained European drillmasters; by the gradual weeding out of such of the officers as had been elected by their men, not for their military abilities, but because they were lenient and even subservient to them; the "Continental" levies at length were moulded into a force that was efficient as an auxiliary to the more highly trained troops of France.³

The most salient cause of the superior steadiness of the Continental levies over the militia was the embodiment among them of large numbers of European immigrants—as there were in the ranks of the United States' army during the War of Secession. These men had no ties of the fireside to cause them to be dissatisfied with a military life, and they took upon themselves the duties of soldiers with an earnestness that the provincial levies could not be induced to do. The great majority of these immigrant volunteers were of Irish birth. They were not the Catholic so-called Celts of the south of Ireland—all of these who served in America during the Revolutionary War served in the British ranks—but the Presbyterian Anglo-Caledonians of the north. These people, as said Lord Harcourt, even while living in their native land, were "in their hearts Americans." That is to say, they were eager to aid a rebellion against the Government. These Anglo-Caledonians constituted the flower of the Revolutionary army, remaining constant to their engagements at times when mutiny and desertion prevailed among the provincial levies. It was

INSURGENT TROOPS AND THEIR ALLIES

asserted by a prominent Loyalist, whose official position should have enabled him to know the facts, that they formed more than one-half of the whole army, one-half of the remainder being English and Scotch.* An extravagant estimate, it would seem; yet it is certain that a very large number of Irish, Scotch and English volunteers served in the Revolutionary army throughout the war, and that, towards its close, that army could not have kept the field without them. As there were several loyal American regiments in active service, it sometimes happened, when the opposing forces met in conflict, that the majority of those fighting for colonial independence were of British and Irish birth, while, substantially, all those fighting for King and Parliament were native Americans.

Besides those of the rank and file, many of the officers of the Revolutionary army were Europeans, a large proportion of them being of British birth and military education. These, upon whom has been bestowed some share of the glamor of the Revolutionary Myth, of course, were mere soldiers of fortune, who had adopted as their motto the detestable but profitable doctrine of *ubi bene, ibi patria*.⁴ The business-like manner in which these men regarded their treason to their native land is shown by some curious incidents. During the second year of the war, one Major Morris, a half-pay officer in the British service, applied to Washington for the appointment of Adjutant-General of his army. Washington was inclined to give him the office, and, in a letter to the Congress, stated—presumably as a reason for so doing—“His story is simply this, that he left the British service in disgust, upon not receiving a promotion to which he was justly entitled.”† The “story” needs no comment. Another instance, perhaps still more remarkable, was that of Major Rogers, who offered his

*Joseph Galloway, *Letters to a Nobleman*, p. 25. See also Galloway's *Examination*.

†Washington to the President of Congress, Jan. 26, 1777: Washington's *Writings*, Vol. IV., p. 302.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

services to the Congress, with the proviso that his offer be kept secret pending its acceptance or rejection, and, in the latter event, he be given a safe-conduct out of the Revolutionary lines, as, in that case, it was his intention to rejoin his command in the British army in the East Indies.* His offer was not accepted, and the safe-conduct refused; whereupon he eluded the surveillance placed upon him and joined the British army, and was given the command of an independent company, at the head of which he harassed his *ci-devant* friends, the Revolutionists, for the remainder of the war. It is possible, of course, that the gentleman was not sincere in his offer to the Congress; but even in that case the incident is little less remarkable, as typical of the free-and-easy way in which treason was regarded during the Revolutionary era.

To Washington, insubordination, desertion and "dastardly behavior" of the men under his command was no new experience; for, during the French and Indian wars, before and after the defeat of General Braddock, he had loudly complained of desertions among the provincial troops, which he declared had "cost the country an immense sum;" and proposed to inflict severe punishment, not only upon the deserters, but upon those who seduced them away and harbored them. Quite as loudly did he complain of the insolence, selfishness and unpatriotic spirit of the colonists. In August, 1754, when Washington was at the town of Winchester, in command of an expedition against the Indians, he reported to Governor Dinwiddie: "The soldiers are deserting constantly; . . . there is scarcely a night, or an opportunity, when there are not desertions, and often two, three or four at a time." At nearly the same period, and at the same place, three hundred and fifty North Carolina troops "disbanded themselves in a very disorderly manner," we are told, "and went off without ceremony." A year later, Washington was again in command of an

*Washington to the President of Congress, June 27, 1776: Washington's *Writings*, Vol. III., p. 440.

INSURGENT TROOPS AND THEIR ALLIES

expeditionary force in the same neighborhood. Two or three score of Indians had attacked the settlers and "blocked up" the rangers in their forts, and, though Washington believed that these backwoods guardsmen were "more encompassed with fear than by the enemy," it was necessary to send them relief. In this crisis, the militia "having absolutely refused to stir," and seeing "the growing insolence of the soldiers, and the indolence and inactivity of the officers," whom he dubbed a "motley herd," Washington was driven almost to despair, and complained that his command would "become a nuisance, an insupportable charge to our country." Time and the efforts of their commander brought no improvement in the *morale* of these troops. At the end of 1756 we find him characterizing them as "obstinate, self-willed, perverse, of little or no service to the people, and very burdensome to the country;" and still a year later, complaining that "that infamous practice" of desertion "among the dastardly drafts" was still prevalent, they leaving their commands "after having received their clothes, arms and bounty money," and without doing any service to requite the expense of their equipment and pay. "In short," wrote Washington, "they try my patience, and almost worry me to death." Nor was this all. If the men of his command tried his patience in the camp, they tried it more in the field. On one occasion, he reports to the Governor, when confronted by the enemy, they "ran off, without one-half of them having discharged their pieces; . . . ran back to Ashby's Fort, contrary to orders, persuasions and threats."⁵

As a desperate remedy for these conditions, Washington proposed to enlist indentured servants, "the owners to be paid a reasonable amount for them;" thinking, perhaps, that British paupers would place a less value on their lives than did the landed Americans. He had before this endeavored to enforce the services of the members of the Society of Friends, but "could by no means bring the Quakers to any terms. They chose

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

rather to be whipped to death than to bear arms." He had also proposed a conscription, but this was objected to by the inhabitants of the more thickly settled parts of the colony, who were not disposed to risk their lives and pay their money for the protection of those of the border lands. "If we talk of obliging men to serve their country," wrote Landon Carter, a member of the House of Burgesses, to Washington, "we are sure to hear a fellow mumbling over the words 'liberty' and 'property' a thousand times. I think as you do. I have endeavored, though not in the field, yet in the Senate, as much as possible to convince the country [that is, the province of Virginia] of danger, and she knows it; but such is her parsimony that she is willing to wait for the rains to wet the powder, and rats to eat the bowstrings of the enemy, rather than attempt to drive them from the frontiers."^{*}

Washington, like Braddock, found his expedition retarded and its effectiveness impaired by the selfishness and greed of those whom he came to protect and the parsimony of their representatives. Though it was essential that the relieving force should be sent against the enemy as speedily as possible, he met with nothing but vexation and delay. "I meet with the greatest opposition. No orders are obeyed but such as a party of soldiers or my own drawn sword enforces. Without this not a single horse for the most earnest occasion can be had," he complained to the Governor; "to such a point has the insolence of these people arrived, by having every point hitherto submitted to them. However, I have given up none," he continued, "nor will I, unless they execute their threat, that is, 'blow out my brains.'" Though, as wrote Washington, in the same letter, such a panic prevailed among the people that they were "alarmed at the most usual and customary cries," yet it was impossible "to get them to act in any respect for

*Landon Carter to Washington, April 17, 1756: Washington's *Writings*, Vol. II., p. 145. Washington to Governor Dinwiddie, Aug. 4, 1776: Washington's *Writings*, Vol. II., pp. 145, 168.

INSURGENT TROOPS AND THEIR ALLIES

their common safety." Extortion and greed met him at every turn. For "powder and a trifling quantity of paper" he had to pay extravagant prices. The mechanics, too, were exorbitant in their demands, and the masters of the indentured servants, who had been enlisted, "daily dunned for payment," and "threatened him with prosecutions from all quarters."*

In short, the experience of Washington in his dealings with his fellow-colonists was identical with that of Braddock and the other British commanders who came to fight their battles. His testimony in relation to these facts throws much light upon the causes of the failures of the military operations of those officers in their wars against the French and Indians. To explain these failures, then, no credence need be given to the tales told by preposterous "historians" of the "cowardice" and "absurdity" of British generals. Hampered with such troops as those pictured by Washington, even though clad in "homespun smallclothes," and "cowhide shoes," any commander, though he possessed the combined genius of a Cæsar and a Napoleon, would have been powerless before the enemy.

From the testimony of Washington it is difficult to discern in these colonial levies the men of "dauntless hearts," animated with an intense desire to "march to the cannon's mouth," so vividly described by our historian. Yet Mr. Roosevelt can do so. "They were," he asserts, "superb individual fighters, beautifully drilled in their own discipline;" and he concurs with the statement of Harrison that they were "the finest light troops in the world."† Still it may be assumed that the first President of the United States had a better opportunity of judging of the facts than had the twenty-fifth.

Such were the conditions that confronted and discomfited Washington during his campaigns in colonial

*Washington to Governor Dinwiddie, Oct. 11, 1755; Washington to Governor Dinwiddie, Nov. 9, 1756: Washington's *Writings*, Vol. II., pp. 104, 105, 199, 200.

†*The Winning of the West*, Vol. I., p. 79.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

days. Having them in mind, it might be supposed that when called upon to deal with the same order of men, as the commander-in-chief of the Revolutionary forces, he would have been prepared for similar conditions. This does not appear to have been the case, for after five months' experience with his new command, we find him uttering many complaints of the incompetency, insubordination, dishonesty and greed of the officers and men under his command: "Could I have foreseen what I have experienced, and am likely to experience, no consideration upon earth should have induced me to accept this command." And a year later: "I solemnly protest that a pecuniary reward of twenty thousand pounds a year would not induce me to undergo what I do."^{*}

It has been said that the army of the Revolution, to a very large extent, was recruited with men of foreign birth; the conditions of its navy were even more remarkable. It is probable that the crews of such of its warships as remained in American waters, in the main, were of colonial birth; but these vessels were of light tonnage and did but little damage to British shipping. The large number of privateers that preyed upon British commerce in European seas⁶ were American only in name. They were purchased and fitted out in the ports of France, which proceedings were "winked at" by the Government of that country,⁷ and manned with men of almost every nativity except American;⁸ or, occasionally, as in the case of one noticed by Franklin, containing "a mixed crew of French, Americans and English."⁹ The commissions under which they sailed were sent in batches by the Congress to their agents in France, who filled in them the names of such seafarers of whatsoever nationality as were willing to risk their lives and fortunes in such questionable adventures. "Blank commissions are wanted here to cruise

*Washington to Joseph Reed, Nov. 28, 1775; Washington to J. A. Washington, Nov. 19, 1776: Washington's *Writings*, Vol. III., p. 179; Vol. IV., p. 184.

INSURGENT TROOPS AND THEIR ALLIES

under your flag against British commerce," wrote the American Commissioner from Paris late in 1776. The Congress, in the meantime, had resolved to send such commissions. A few weeks later another such request was sent to the Congress from Paris, and soon thereafter the blank commissions were sent, specifically for the purpose of "fitting out privateers in France." They seem to have been furnished on a liberal scale, though occasionally a "fresh supply" was requested.¹⁰

The acts of the commanders of these vessels brought them very near the verge of piracy, and sometimes beyond it. One of them, a Captain Cunningham or Conyngham, was threatened with being "tried for his life as a pirate." This man had captured an English packet ship and other British ships, and, later, was captured himself, when, as his commission was found to post-date the period of his first capture, it was assumed that he had acted without even the flimsy authority of one of these blank commissions; but as they could be had for the asking, this seems unlikely. At any rate, after an investigation, he was placed on the status of an ordinary prisoner of war, and later exchanged.*

In this case the charge of piracy was made by British officials. On other occasions the Spanish and Danish ministers complained of acts of piracy committed by American privateers upon their ships and in their waters, the latter complaining of "a most grievous outrage" committed by three American ships, by plundering and burning two English merchantmen "on his [Danish] Majesty's territory." "It therefore follows," he added, "that they can only be considered as pirates."†

It was not alone American privateers that were manned by alien crews; the same condition prevailed in the regular warships.¹¹ As said an early American historian of the most famous of them, their crews were

**Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, Vol. II., pp. 322, 325; Vol. III., pp. 350, 394.

†De Blome to Vergennes, Feb. 6, 1782: *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, Vol. V., p. 148.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

composed of "a mixture of English, Irish, Scotch, Portuguese, Norwegians, Germans, Spaniards, Swedes, Italians and Malays," with "a few Americans to fill the stations of sea-officers." "To keep this motley crew in order 135 soldiers were put on board, under the command of some officers of inferior rank, and were not much less singularly mixed as to countries than the regular crew."¹² Of such materials were composed the crews of the Revolutionary warships. In some instances they were commanded by foreigners; in one, at least, by a native of Great Britain.

How common was the employment of men of British birth in American ships of war during the Revolution is shown by the fact that on the occasion of a mutiny on one of them, thirty-eight of her crew being arrested and imprisoned at a port of France, Benjamin Franklin, then the plenipotentiary of the newly emancipated States to that country—in order, as he said, to avoid the trouble and expense of a court-martial—proposed to exchange them with Great Britain for an equal number of seamen captured from other American vessels, because, he explained, "the perfidious conduct of English and Scotch sailors in our service a good deal discourages the idea of taking them out of those prisons in order to employ them."* A suggestion probably unique, and certainly grotesque. As the crews of the American ships of war were composed mainly of Europeans, and there were many native-born Americans on board of British ships, one vainly looks for the reality of those exhibitions of fervid patriotism in the naval actions of the Revolution reflected by the Revolutionary Myth.

They who so confidently assert that it was in the power of the revolting colonists to gain their independence without foreign aid have little regard for the opinion of Washington, who should have been a fairly

*Franklin to the Committee of Foreign Affairs, May 26, 1779: *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, Vol. III., pp. 187, 188.

INSURGENT TROOPS AND THEIR ALLIES

competent judge of the matter; or for that of other participants and observers in the Revolutionary War scarcely less competent than he. From an early period of that war until near its close, Washington, by oft-repeated declarations, clearly expressed his belief that the colonies without the aid of France and Spain could never have achieved their independence; and that even with that aid the result was not beyond a doubt. It is true that, during that period, at times of unexpected success of the Revolutionary arms, of conciliatory overtures from the ministry, and on the first information of the French and Spanish alliances, he showed signs of elation and confidence; but these sentiments were transient and of rare occurrence—his prevailing feeling was one of despondency and doubt. The most potent cause for this feeling was the lukewarm assistance he received from those who had precipitated the insurrection and those who had so enthusiastically supported them; scarcely less so, the selfishness, avarice and dishonesty that surrounded him and obstructed his efforts.

As early as the fall of 1776, Washington sees “a very gloomy prospect” looming ahead, and is satisfied, “beyond the possibility of a doubt, that unless some speedy and effectual measures,” “the most vigorous and decisive actions, are immediately adopted,” “our cause will be lost,” and “the certain and absolute loss of our liberties will be the inevitable consequences.” A little later, “if every nerve is not strained,” he thought, “the game is pretty nearly up.”*

Even after the consummation of the French alliance, Washington’s judgment as to its result is still “puzzled and confounded,” and many months of its operation leaves him in doubt as to “what may be the issue of the contest;” for he has “never yet seen the time in which our affairs were at so low an ebb.” Soon is fore-

*Washington to the President of Congress, September 24, 1776; to the President of Congress, October 4, 1776; to J. A. Washington, December, 18, 1776: Washington’s *Writings*, Vol. IV., pp. 110, 134, 231.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

shadowed the alliance with Spain, and with it comes hope of the overthrow of the power of Britain, resulting from her "insanity" in rejecting the mediation of that nation, and her foolhardiness in adding another potent foe to those she has already to encounter.*

But months pass by, and the combined navies of France and Spain have not sunk the fleet of England or their armies overrun her fertile fields. Nor has the junction of the arms of their faithful ally with those of the revolted colonists enabled them to banish a single British soldier from American soil. Doubts again arise in the mind of Washington; for instead of expected victories the Revolutionary army is suffering from disastrous defeats, and is wasting to a "shadow," provisions are hard to obtain, and he is troubled "with the most anxious and alarming fears." Affairs wear "a very dangerous complexion," and, unless a different system be adopted, "must soon become desperate beyond the possibility of recovery." "Indeed, I have almost ceased to hope," Washington declared at this crisis; "what are we to expect will be the case if there should be another campaign? In all probability the advantage will be on the side of the English, and then what would become of America?"†

The result of the triple alliance had hopelessly disappointed the revolted colonists. Its two potent parties had suffered more injury than they had been able to inflict upon the common enemy, and their power for offensive action had been destroyed or much impaired. At least, so thought Washington, for he declared that "the circumstances of our allies, as well as our own, call for peace." Yet he added that, in default of sub-

*Washington to Gouverneur Morris, October 4, 1778; to James Warren, March 31, 1779; to "A Friend," May 19, 1779; to the President of Congress, August 16, 1779: Washington's *Writings*, Vol. VI., pp. 84, 210, 252, 320.

†Washington to General Irving, January 9, 1780; to the President of Congress, April 3, 1780; to Joseph Reed, May 27, 1780; to the President of Congress, August 20, 1780: Washington's *Writings*, Vol. VI., p. 441; Vol. VII., pp. 13, 58-62, 159.

INSURGENT TROOPS AND THEIR ALLIES

stantial, and evidently unexpected, aid from one of the least willing states, it would be necessary to "confess to our allies that we look wholly to them for safety." The unexpected aid does not come, and "the prospects grow duller," and it may be necessary "to disperse, if not disband, the army" at the end of the campaign; so that "we may expect soon to be reduced to the humiliating condition of seeing the cause of America, in America, upheld by foreign arms;" for, declared Washington to the Congress, it was impossible to expel the British forces "till we derive more effectual aid from abroad."*

It is a curious fact that the year in which the most melancholy of these melancholy reflections were made by the commander-in-chief of the Revolutionary army was the gloomiest of all the years of the century for England. The year in which she was menaced by the arms of France and Spain in Europe, by the victorious hordes of Hyder Ali in Asia; and, in America, the paltry force she could spare from her armies needed for the protection of the homes of her people was fully engaged in conflict with her insurgent subjects. The year in which the colossal powers of the north were armed against her in so-called neutrality; Ireland sullen and also in hostile arms; her navy, for a time, driven from the Channel by the superior fleets of France and Spain. The year, too, that brought the terrors of discord and rebellion to her island home; for it was the year of the Gordon riots, and for many days her capital lay at the mercy of a daring and insolent mob.

These happenings, indeed, had given Washington some "peaceful dreams," and caused him to believe that "the hour of deliverance was not far distant." "But alas!" he continued, "these prospects, flattering as they

*Washington to Joseph Reed, May 28, 1780; to Lafayette, July 27, 1780; to the President of Congress, July 30, 1780; to the President of Congress, August 20, 1780; to the President of Congress, September 5, 1780: Washington's *Writings*, Vol. VII., pp. 61, 62, 125, 126, 160, 206.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

were, have proved illusory, and I see nothing before us but accumulated distress."*

To the humiliating condition foreseen by Washington the revolting colonists actually were reduced. The cause of America, or, rather, that of the American Revolutionists, *in America*, was upheld by foreign arms. Despairing of the power or the will of the colonists to resist the British forces in the field, Washington, directly, and through the medium of the Congress, made another appeal to France. She had done much to aid them, but must do much more or lose the result of her previous exertions.

To the French admiral, the Count de Guichen, and to the Chevalier de la Luzerne, the French envoy, Washington wrote, setting forth the extremity of the needs of the Revolutionists. To the last named he wrote: "I need use no arguments to convince Your Excellency of the extremity to which our affairs are tending and the necessity of support." To Benjamin Franklin: "Our present situation makes one of two things essential to us; a peace, or the most vigorous aid of our allies. . . . To me nothing appears more evident than that the period of our opposition will very shortly arrive if our allies cannot afford us that effectual aid."†

To John Laurens, who had been appointed by the Congress a commissioner to France, there personally to solicit for the Revolutionists help, in the form of money, troops and ships of war, Washington wrote that a crisis had arisen in the country that rendered "immediate and efficient succors from abroad indispensable to its safety;" that there was an "absolute necessity for speedy relief, not within the compass of our means," and that, without this relief, only "a feeble and expiring effort" could be made by the Revolutionary army, which effort would be "in all probability the period of our opposition;" for, he added, emphatically,

*Washington to General Cadwallader, October 5, 1780: Washington's *Writings*, Vol. VII., p. 229.

†Washington's *Writings*, Vol. VII., pp. 197, 200, 243.

INSURGENT TROOPS AND THEIR ALLIES

"day does not follow night more certainly than it brings with it some additional proof of the impracticability of our carrying on the war without the aids you were directed to solicit." "In a word," he concluded, "we are at the end of our tether, and now or never our deliverance must come."*

These appeals, and those of the Congress, were supported by the French admiral and general, M. de Terney and Count de Rochambeau, who, in letters to the French minister, Count de Vergennes, set forth the urgent needs of the Revolutionists. The former declared that: "If France does not decide the question [whether or not the American insurrection should be crushed by British arms], all is lost for the insurgents." The latter appealed to the minister: "Send us troops and money, but do not depend upon these people [the revolting colonists]; their means of resistance are only momentary, and called forth when they are attacked in their homes."†

Laurens obeyed his instructions, and presented to the French minister a memorial setting forth the necessities of the insurgents. He wrote of the exhaustion of the colonists; their distress and discontent; the impotence of the Revolutionary army, and the absolute necessity of an ample supply of money and a reinforcement of troops and warships; and declared that "the fate of America depends upon the immediate and decisive succor of her august ally." Vergennes, though he was convinced that the colonists were not "a race of conquerors," and had but a poor opinion of their constancy, and slight confidence in their energy, decided that the needed aid must be afforded.¹³

So it happened that His Most Christian Majesty, their "Great, Faithful and Beloved Friend and Ally," came

*Letters to John Laurens of January 15, 1781, and April 9, 1781: Washington's *Writings*, Vol. VII., pp. 368-372; Vol. VIII., p. 7.

†De Terney to Count de Vergennes, October 18, 1780; Count de Rochambeau to Count de Vergennes, July 16, 1780: Washington's *Writings*, Vol. VII., pp. 241, 506.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

again to the aid of the despairing revolting colonists, lately the implacable enemies, now the suppliant friends of France. Warships, troops, money, munitions and supplies were sent to them. The French land force, equal in number to the remnant of an army remaining to General Cornwallis, joined with a still larger number of Continental troops, pressed that little army back to the sea, of which the French admiral, with a preponderant naval force, held the command. Surrounded with hostile forces by land and water, cut off from reinforcements and supplies, the British general surrendered his command, and a great advance was made on the road to American independence.

Though the surrender was made on American territory and to the American commander-in-chief; though Cornwallis himself had prepared his own defeat by splitting his small force into three divisions, apparently with the object of having them beaten in detail, and having so disposed of two of them, had marched calmly with the other into the trap set for it; even if it were true, as has been asserted on insufficient testimony, that Washington, and not Rochambeau, planned the movement, yet the campaign that ended at Yorktown essentially was a French victory, since the result could not have been accomplished, or even attempted, but for the potent assistance of the land and sea forces of France.

The necessity for the French and Spanish alliances, since so confidently denied, at the time of their need was acknowledged by many of the Disunion leaders other than Washington, and of their allies, among them by Robert Morris, who, six months after the declaration of independence, wrote to the Commissioners at Paris: "For my part, I see but two chances for relief; one is from you. If the Court of France open their eyes to their own interest, and think the commerce of North America will compensate them for expense and evil of a war with Britain, they may readily create a diversion and afford us succors that will change the fate of affairs; *but they must do it soon; our situation is*

INSURGENT TROOPS AND THEIR ALLIES

*critical and does not admit of delay. . . . But should time be lost, and succors be withheld, America must sue for peace from her oppressors.”**

From that time until the close of the war much testimony is to be found from the pens of the Disunion chiefs and their foreign helpers of the helplessness of their armies in the field, and of their inability to continue the war without alien aid. In 1781 the Count de Fersen, a French officer serving on the staff of General Rochambeau, wrote: “*Ce pays-ci n'est pas en état de soutenir une guerre longue. Si la France ne les secourt vigoureusement ils seront obligés de faire la paix.*”† And, later still, a year after the surrender at Yorktown, Alexander Hamilton declared that “effectual succor” must be had from France, for “these states are in no humor for continued exertions. If the war lasts it must be carried on by external succor.”‡ Strange to say, during the whole of the time that the Revolutionary commander-in-chief was proclaiming the impending defeat of his army and the destruction of his hopes for independence, the “friends of America” in England were vehemently declaring its impossibility. “You cannot conquer America,” a phrase born of Chatham’s eloquence, became their rallying cry and the excuse for treasonable acts and utterances.

It is certain that Washington did not agree with them.

Even after the accomplishment of independence there was not lacking testimony from the Revolutionary chiefs of the necessity of foreign assistance in order to attain it. “Till France joined us our troops were not able to withstand the enemy,” very honestly said Governor Randolph, in the Virginia Convention, in 1788. “Was not the assistance of France necessary to enable the United

*Letter to the Commissioners at Paris, December 21, 1776: *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, Vol. II., p. 235.

†*Lettres du Compte de Fersen*, Vol. I., p. 53.

‡Letter to de Noailles and Lafayette, November, 1782: Lodge’s *Hamilton*, Vol. VIII., pp. 86, 90.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

States to repel the attack of Great Britain?" he asked, on the same occasion.*

So that when, in 1794, Citoyen Genet declared that but for France Americans would then have been vassals of England; and when, in later days, his countryman, Edmond About, asserted that the great American republic owed its existence to France, they were making no unwarrantable boasts.

But Mr. Roosevelt asserts, "As a matter of fact, England would have stood no chance at all had the contest been strictly confined to British troops on the one hand and to the rebellious colonists on the other." "When the French court declared in our favor," he adds, "the worst was already over."¹⁴

The reason for this belief Mr. Roosevelt does not make very clear. But he says that as Great Britain had German allies, and the help of the Indians and the Loyalists, "the withdrawal of all Hessians, Tories and Indians from the British army would have been cheaply purchased by the loss of our own foreign allies."[†]

Doubtless no one knows better than does Mr. Roosevelt that the alliance of the Indians was no help at all to Great Britain; that if there had been no such alliance the Indians would have done as much or more damage to the Revolutionary army and people as they did in consequence of that alliance. Doubtless, too, he knows that the aid rendered by the Loyalists was of little avail because of the imbecile policy of the British ministry and the disloyal conduct of General Howe. But laying aside these facts, and the equally pertinent fact that half of the inhabitants of Great Britain favored the cause of the American revolutionists, while half of the colonists favored the cause of the British Government, and that, therefore, in no case could the Revolutionary War have been a contest between the British and American people, there are other facts showing the fallacy of Mr. Roosevelt's contention.

*Elliott's *Debates*, Vol. III., p. 118.

†*Gouverneur Morris*, p. 119.

INSURGENT TROOPS AND THEIR ALLIES

Had the contest been confined to the British troops on the one hand—even the paltry force which the necessity for defence against her European enemies allowed her to despatch to the colonies—and the revolting colonists, without allies, on the other, there would have been no Saratoga, for it was the secret aid of France that enabled them to arm and equip their troops, without which aid they could not have gained that victory. There would have been no Trenton, for for that disaster the "allies" of Great Britain alone were responsible. There would have been no Yorktown, for without the fleet and army of France that surrender would not have occurred. Had there been no alliance of the revolting colonists with France and Spain, whose navies twice dominated the English Channel,* insulted the coast of Great Britain and drove her fleets from her own waters, fourfold the number of troops could have been sent to the colonies. During the latter part of the war Great Britain maintained more than three hundred thousand men in arms,† the vast majority of whom she was obliged to employ in defensive measures against her European enemies. Had she been free to employ them, or half of them, against the insurgent colonists, it is scarcely to be supposed that she would have felt the loss of a few regiments of German mercenaries, who, though excellent troops, were ill commanded, and performed but little real service. Washington, whose army was worn to a "shadow" with the task of opposing the small force that was sent against them, would scarcely have kept the field long against such a well-appointed and numerous army as could have been sent against them under the conditions supposed by Mr. Roosevelt.

Mr. Roosevelt's assertions cannot be sustained by a single fact, or made to appear probable by any method of reasoning.

In connection with the French alliance another misrepresentation is universally made. It is asserted that

*Lord Charles Beresford, *Nelson and His Times*.

†314,000, according to a report to Parliament.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

this alliance—the forerunner of those of Spain and Holland—was brought about by the victory at Saratoga; and, in consequence of this mistaken belief, that conflict has been numbered among the decisive battles of the world. But this assertion is as unfounded as that which declares the Revolutionists capable of winning their independence without foreign assistance.

The facts are these: As has been said, in granting assistance to the revolting colonists it had not been the intention of the French minister or king to help them to independence, but only temporarily to strengthen them that they might more effectually cripple the power of Britain. But an action of the British ministry changed that intent. That action was the true cause of the Franco-American alliance. Incited thereto by the persistent clamors of the Opposition, and himself inclined to concession, Lord North introduced into Parliament what are styled his "conciliatory bills." These acts, says Mr. Roosevelt, "were pressed hastily through Parliament because of the fear of an American alliance with France, which was then, indeed, almost concluded."* But there is no warrant for this statement; the acts were indeed passed about the time of the consummation of the alliance, but their intended introduction had been announced many weeks before, and, being a measure of the ministry, their passage was assured before they were introduced. Instead of the French alliance being the cause of the conciliatory acts, it was the conciliatory acts that caused the French alliance; and had the conciliatory acts never been proposed, it is probable that there never would have been a French alliance.

These acts authorized proposals to the colonies by the terms of which they would have become virtually independent, but maintaining an offensive and defensive alliance with the mother country. This caused great alarm to the French Court, for it was believed that the result would be an attack upon France by the joint

**Gouverneur Morris*, p. 87.

INSURGENT TROOPS AND THEIR ALLIES

forces of Britain and America, a belief that was skilfully fostered by Franklin.¹⁵ Therefore, believing that the safety of his country could be assured only by the actual independence of the colonies, Count de Vergennes persuaded his master to enter into a treaty of alliance with them on that basis. Soon after the treaty was signed, in a letter to Conrad Gerard, his chief secretary, Vergennes explained the reasons for its execution in these words: "The terms that she [England] proposed to them [the colonists] were so manifestly aimed at France that there was not a moment to lose, if we seriously desired to prevent their having effect." The King, therefore, made a treaty with the deputies of Congress.* Near the same time, the King himself wrote to his cousin of Spain that, inasmuch as the English would never forget the "*mauvaises offices*" of France, in giving secret aid to the colonists, it was "necessary to begin to treat with them to prevent their reunion with the mother country."[†]

It was not, therefore, the success of the Revolutionary arms at Saratoga, Trenton or Princeton that brought about the Franco-American alliance, as has been so generally asserted, but the shortsighted action of the British ministry in perpetrating, perhaps, the worst of their many bad blunders.

The common belief that large armies contended for and against Imperial rule in America is contradicted by the records. Seldom did any British force engaged in conflict with the Revolutionists number more than the number contained in a dozen modern regiments; and those of the Americans opposed to them—though occasionally, as at Saratoga, Trenton, Princeton and Camden, they outnumbered the British force three or

*Instructions to Gerard upon his going to America as the envoy of France, March 29, 1778: *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, Vol. II., p. 524.

†King Louis to King Carlos, January 8, 1778: Flassan's *Diplomatie Francaise*, Vol. VII., p. 177 (American translation): *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, Vol. II., p. 467.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

four to one—generally were little larger, and on one occasion, at least, not so large.

The total force of the Revolutionists—though in the summer of 1776 it was claimed that they had in the field eighty thousand men, armed and equipped, and in the following year sixty-six thousand—probably at no time exceeded thirty thousand effective men. The British force in North America was distributed from Halifax to San Antonio, and in the islands of the sea; scarcely were there ever more than twenty thousand men available for action in the revolted colonies.¹⁶

Corporals' guards engaged in affairs of outposts decided the fate of the colonies so far as it was decided by military operations in America.

CHAPTER V.

PHILANTHROPIC TREASON.¹

THE idea apparently entertained by some writers that the American Revolution was a contest between Great Britain and her colonies without any material division of sentiment on either side, of course, is erroneous. But few seem to realize that, in fact, it was a civil war, with a well-defined line of cleavage drawn through both countries, though armed hostilities were confined to one of them. Large numbers of the inhabitants of Great Britain, and substantially all those of Ireland, took the part of the Revolutionists, and as large a proportion of the colonists took the part of Great Britain.

The part played in the drama of the American Revolution by the great Whig chiefs of England was by no means an unimportant one. From the beginning of the Disunion agitation until the signing of the treaty of peace they did their utmost to further the plan of independence formed by the Disunion chiefs of America. With untiring perseverance and without scruple they built up a party in Great Britain that abetted them in all they said and did, though they overstepped the verge of treason. They affiliated with the Disunion party in America, encouraging its leaders in their opposition to the Government with the assurance that their friends across the Atlantic would not permit them to be coerced. They pledged them their support, and assured them that their only fear was that there might be a "fatal yielding" to the claims of the Government on the part of the colonists.²

When in office these eminent "friends of America" yielded to all the demands made by the Disunion chiefs—

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

demands, as wrote an English pamphleteer of the day, made "with a loud voice, full of anger, defiance and denunciation;*" demands founded upon no constitutional basis—and thus prepared the way for greater and still more unconstitutional demands, which, had they been granted, would have transformed the dependence of the colonies upon the general Government into a sort of *quasi* alliance with Great Britain, determinable at their pleasure.

When in Opposition they opposed every measure of the Government intended for the pacification of the colonies already in insurrection. After armed hostilities had been begun they cast aside all their obligations as citizens and subjects, neglecting no opportunity to give aid and comfort to the enemies of their country. With shameless audacity they proclaimed their advocacy of rebellion in the Houses of Parliament and at the foot of the throne.† With superlative insolence they threatened the ministers with speedy and condign punishment for their loyalty to their king and country.³ No fact relating to the American Revolution is more amazing than the malignant and daringly outspoken treason of the English Whigs. They declared the valid claims of Parliament to be unconstitutional and tyrannical, and the pretensions of the revolted colonists to be lawful and just; that these "true and genuine sons of the earth"—three millions of them—animated as they were by the glorious spirit of Whiggism, were invincible; that such was their fierce spirit that, rather than submit to the dominion of Parliament, they would retreat to their woods and liberty, or retire over the Appalachian Mountains, there to become hordes of English Tartars, ever ready to pour down, an irresistible cavalry, upon the habitations of the "slaves" who adhered to the Government. They were likened to a band of wolves that the ministers had attempted to shear, mistaking them for

*Dean Tucker, in *Good Humour*.

†See *Parliamentary History*, Vol. XIX., pp. 620, *et seq.*; Wraxall's *Historical Memoirs of My Own Time*, Vol. II., p. 228.

PHILANTHROPIC TREASON

sheep.* In the Commons no opportunity was neglected that would encourage the Disunion leaders to continued opposition. Truly was it declared that "the seditious spirit of the colonies owes its birth to factions in this House."[†]

No action was too base or cruel to be attributed by the Whig leaders to the ministers. They were a "committee of darkness," "black conspirators," who plotted the destruction of the British Empire,[‡] and "fomented the American revolt in order to create a decent apology for slaughter, conquest and unconditional submission."[§] No act of the revolted colonists and their British abettors savored so much of treason as to fail of the commendation of the Whig orators.

In the Commons they unblushingly declared the insurgent army to be "our army."^{||} In that House Benjamin Franklin and Henry Laurens—both then engaged in an attempt to induce European powers to make war upon Great Britain—were eulogized as exalted patriots.^{**} Richard Montgomery, lately an officer in the British army, who had resigned his commission in pique because he was not promoted to as high a rank as he conceived himself qualified to fill, had deserted his colors, joined the enemy in arms, and at the head of a body of insurgents invaded territory at peace under the British flag with the avowed purpose of conquest. In this attempt he had lost his life, and his death in arms against his country gave an opportunity to the Whig chiefs to pronounce his eulogy and denounce the deep damnation of

*Speeches of Chatham and Burke in the Lords and Commons.

[†]Speech of George Grenville in the House of Commons in reply to Chatham in the debate on the repeal of the Stamp Act.

[‡]From a speech of General Conway in debate in the House of Commons.

[§]Speech of Lord Camden, November 18, 1777: *Parliamentary Register*, Vol. X., pp. 30. 31.

^{||}Wraxall's *Historical Memoirs*, Vol. II., p. 228; Lady Minto's *Life of Sir Gilbert Elliott*.

^{**}Wraxall's *Historical Memoirs*, Vol. II., p. 2.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

his taking off. It was there asserted, in open debate, by a loyal member, that information regarding the weakness of the Government had "been exposed or pointed out to the rebels" by members of that House, and even that similar information had been transmitted to the Court of Versailles. "Every support," said this gentleman, "has been given the Americans, who have placed their confidence in the encouragement extended to them within these walls."*

Every report of the success of the British arms came to these ill-fashioned patriots as a "dismal piece of news," and was declared by them to be "ruinous to liberty." Every disaster was made a subject for their rejoicing.⁴ They plotted together to "clog" the wars waged by the Government against rebels in arms. They were not ashamed to confer with the emissaries of these rebels, to act as their spies, and to furnish them with information that might be used with disastrous effect upon their country and countrymen.⁶ They opposed, by every available means, the enrollment of an army fit to cope with the insurrectionists; at one time offering pretended constitutional objections to enlistments, at others exhorting their countrymen to refrain from enlisting in an army to be employed for the coercion of their fellow Whigs across the Atlantic, who were contending for their freedom as well as their own; that the British forces sent to the colonies were inevitably doomed to defeat; but, even in the unlikely event of their success in suppressing the insurrection, that success would result in enslaving Englishmen as well as Americans. They appealed to the cupidity of the merchants by assuring them that the war against the colonies would be destructive of commerce and leave them bankrupt.[†] The natural result of these patriotic efforts was that "the common people," as wrote Lord Camden, "held the war

**Annual Register, 1777, p. 211.* Wraxall's *Historical Memoirs*, Vol. II., p. 228.

†See Burke's speeches to his constituents at Bristol.

PHILANTHROPIC TREASON

in abhorrence, and the merchants and tradesmen, for obvious reasons, were likewise against it.”*

Further to antagonize the people against the Government, they brought unfounded charges against its officers of venality, treason, and even insanity.†

Indeed, so extravagant were the utterances of these illustrious Whig statesmen and their supporters that they seemed, like the famed “Bulls of Borodale,” to have been driven mad with the echoes of their own bellowings. Edmund Burke characterized as “*sacrilegious*” the action of the ministry in ordering a blockade of the insurgent ports, at a time when these insurgents, for several months, had been making war upon the Government by land and sea.‡ Charles James Fox missed no opportunity publicly to express his delight at the defeat of his country’s arms. The Duke of Richmond, who had declared his intention to depart from Great Britain, given over to slavery, and to seek an asylum in the free and progressive monarchy of France, joined the chorus of his brother Whigs in casting odium upon the ministry and in lauding the revolting colonists. This noble democrat, upon learning that a thousand British seamen had perished in a storm, “with joy sparkling in his eyes,”—“*parricide joy*” one of his hearers, not inaptly, styled it—expressed the satisfaction he felt at the catastrophe. “Not one escaped!” he declared in an ecstasy of delight.§ So many there were the less to be used in coercing the blameless Americans.

Nor were the utterances of the dimmer lights of English Whiggism one whit less extravagant. The objurations of Wilkes and his henchmen were many and scandalous. One William Baker, a prominent Whig and a supporter of Burke, declared that if the utter ruin

*Chatham, *Correspondence*, Vol. IV., p. 401.

†William Baker to Burke, October 22, 1777: Burke’s *Works*, Vol. I., p. 353.

‡Burke to Champion, December 15, 1775: Burke’s *Works*, Vol. I., p. 302.

§Life of Sir Gilbert Elliott, Vol. I., pp. 76, 77.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

of his country were to be the consequence of her claim to the right of taxing the colonies, he would be the first to say, "Let her perish!"* One Dr. Price, a Dissenting minister—who in after years styled the organizers of the Reign of Terror "heavenly philanthropists"—persistently preached and wrote against the wickedness of the Government in attempting to maintain control over the colonies, and for these patriotic utterances he was presented with the freedom of the city of London in a gold box. The American Congress, too, rewarded the efforts of the worthy doctor by conferring upon him the citizenship of the United States, and inviting him to remove with his family to America, where he was promised a lucrative office. The offer was declined by Price, on the plea of age and failing energy, in a letter in which he eulogized the Congress as "the most respectable and important assembly in the world;" and in which he predicted "a shocking catastrophe" to Great Britain as the result of her decadence and her crimes.⁷

Josiah Wedgwood, the exalted potter, added his voice to the general clamor; lamenting the decadence of his country, but rejoicing that it was only Great Britain that was doomed to destruction, and that the virtuous Americans were destined to be free.[†] Wedgwood, like Price, Priestley, and many other English Whigs, was a secret correspondent and spy for the American Disunion chiefs; and he seems to have done even more than his colleagues in sowing treasonable sentiments among the laborers and artisans of the provinces, thus making it impossible to obtain recruits from that class. However, Wedgwood was not so open in his advocacy of rebellion as were many of his colleagues. He was enjoying the patronage of the Court in the sale of his wares, and he seems to have been very much alive to his own interests. Conspicuous in his opposition to

*William Baker to Burke, October 22, 1777: Burke's *Works*, Vol. I., p. 353.

†Letter to Thomas Bentley early in 1778.

PHILANTHROPIC TREASON

these men and to other Nonconformist ministers—if rightly he may be called a Nonconformist—was John Wesley, who, by exhortation as well as by his pen,* endeavored to regenerate the failing loyalty of his countrymen, and to show that the American insurrectionists were not animated alone by an unselfish love of their species, but rather by a desire for self-aggrandisement.

The Muse, too, was awakened to energy by the acclamations of the “friends of America” in the cause of the oppressed colonists. Robert Burns wrote some stanzas, which, I suppose, it would be heresy to call doggerel, yet for which it would be difficult to find a term more appropriate, in praise of Montgomery and other Revolutionary commanders and politicians, and in derision of the ministers. One Jones (later Sir William, the Oriental scholar) also felt impelled to express his overcharged feelings in verse. He wrote some lines in which “Virtue,” accompanied by “Truth,” “Reason,” “Valor” and “Justice,” was depicted as abandoning enslaved Britain and crossing the Atlantic to take up her residence on the banks of the Delaware, there to instruct American youth how to wield “th’ avenging steel” over the heads of British tyrants.

No secrecy was deemed necessary in the expression of these and kindred sentiments by those who cherished them or professed to cherish them. “The same inward suggestions,” wrote a friend of Burke, “which determined us originally to resist these measures [of opposition to the colonial insurrectionists] ought to confirm us in an inflexible, unrelenting, public and avowed opposition to them.”† Accordingly, they were openly avowed, and unscrupulously, as well as inflexibly and unrelentingly, urged upon the people and received by them as if they were the most patriotic of utterances.

Any journal, pamphlet or book advocating the cause

*See Wesley’s pamphlet, *A Calm Address to the Inhabitants of England*.

†William Baker to Burke, October 22, 1777: Burke’s *Works*, Vol. I., p. 353.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

of the revolting colonists, or in praise of their leaders, was sure of a favorable reception by the English public and a ready sale. That of Dr. Price, *The Justice and Policy of the War with America*, more conspicuous for its partizanship than for its trustworthy statements, in a short time reached a circulation of more than sixty thousand. A poem written in praise of Washington, published in London at a high price, also reached a very great circulation. This work was published when the war had been raging for five years. One may imagine the reception of a poem in praise of Jefferson Davis or Robert E. Lee, in Boston, say, in 1864! After the conflict at Lexington a subscription for the benefit of "the widows and orphans of our beloved American fellow-subjects inhumanly murdered by the King's troops at or near Lexington and Concord,"* was raised in London and the proceeds transmitted to Franklin. In that contest many British soldiers were killed, but there was no thought of raising money for the benefit of their widows and orphans—they had been fighting for their king and country.

Nor were the actions of the ministers less remarkable than those of the Opposition. Called upon to conduct a war against a well-organized rebellion, whose leaders were animated by the most implacable animosity to the Government and possessed great resources, and who already were in treaty with a foreign power with a view to an offensive alliance, they prepared for the conflict after the manner of a schoolmaster quelling the outbreak of mischievous scholars. They placed the command of the army and navy in the hands of two brothers, both of whom had declared their belief that it was wrong to coerce the revolting colonists; and the portfolio of war in the hands of one who had declared that they never could be subdued by force of arms.⁸ Therefore, a resort to arms must be held in abeyance; an "inveterate rebellion" were best subdued by proclamation.⁹

*John Horne Tooke, in the *Evening Post*.

PHILANTHROPIC TREASON

Certainly these were remarkable conditions, conditions which should not be overlooked by those who desire to obtain a clear view of the facts of the American Revolution. They continued with but slight amelioration until the consummation of the alliance of France with the revolted colonists. Then ensued a partial return to sanity; patriotism no longer was confined to a few officers of the army and navy. But many years were to pass, another revolution was to begin and end, before Britain was healed of the wounds inflicted upon her by her own sons in their party dissensions consequent upon the colonial revolt.

French writers who assert that the American colonists were indebted to France for the attainment of their independence make no unwarrantable boast, for without French military and naval assistance that independence could not have been attained. Yet, as that assistance would not have been afforded but for the action of the Opposition party in England, and as that party never tired in its efforts to make that assistance effectual and to prevent the taking of effective means to suppress the insurrection, more truthfully it can be said that American independence was the gift of the English Whigs.

CHAPTER VI.

AMERICAN PATRIOTISM AND SELF-SEEKING.

DID one heart animate the whole body of the colonists? Were the American Disunionists inspired by those benevolent and disinterested principles, that inflexible love of freedom, attributed to them by their British admirers and abettors? Were they intellectually and morally superior to the peoples of Europe, as asserted by their historians? Was the Revolution achieved with that benign tranquillity affirmed by Mr. Bancroft? Did new forms of virtue, fidelity to principle, unselfishness, a strange elevation of feeling and dignity of action pervade the masses of the American people at the period of the Revolution?

All observers testify to the intense jealousy existing between the provinces before, during and after the Revolution. "Fire and water," we are told by a traveller who visited the colonies a few years before the open agitation for Disunion began, "are not more heterogeneous than the different colonies in North America. Nothing can exceed the jealousy and emulation which they possess in regard to each other. . . . Were they left to themselves there would soon be a civil war from one end of the continent to the other."* A traveller of the previous decade gives similar testimony, and notes with astonishment the fact that the several provinces were so careless of their common interest that, on such occasions as one of them being overrun by the enemy, the others not only refused to

*Andrew Burnaby, *Travels Through the Middle Settlements, etc.*; Pinkerton's *Voyages*, Vol. XIII., p. 752.

AMERICAN PATRIOTISM AND SELF-SEEKING

give aid to their distressed sister province, but selfishly carried on commerce with the enemy that was engaged in devastating it.*

This was the testimony of an Englishman and a Swede, but native testimony to the same effect is not wanting. "Were these colonies left to themselves to-morrow," wrote James Otis, "America would be a mere shambles of blood and confusion before little petty states could be settled."† "Their jealousy of each other is so great," wrote Benjamin Franklin, "that they have never been able to effect a union among themselves; . . . they could not unite for their defence against the French and Indians who were perpetually harassing their settlements, burning their villages and murdering their people."‡

What of "the masses" that inhabited these jarring colonies? What is said of them by their visitors and their own countrymen?

"The Saints of New England," Colonel Byrd, a landed gentleman of Virginia, declared to be cunning, hypocritical and dishonest; "foul traders," ready to "palliate perjury," to cheat the law and get money.¹

Lewis Morris, of New York, father of Gouverneur Morris, seems to have considered it his duty to make his opinion of New England men a matter of official record. In the office of the Surrogate of the City of New York is filed his last will and testament. In that document there is contained a clause referring to "that low craft and cunning so incident to the people of that country [New England], and which are so interwoven in their constitution that they cannot conceal it from the world, though many of them, under the sanctified garb of religion, have attempted to impose themselves upon the world as honest men."

These were the opinions of men of rival provinces,

*Pinkerton's *Voyages*, Vol. XIII., pp. 460, 461; Peter Kalm, *Travels into North America*.

†*Answer to the Halifax Libel*, p. 16.

‡Franklin's *Canada Pamphlet: Works*, Vol. IV., pp. 41, 42.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

and, no doubt, prejudiced. What say the New England men of the character of "the masses" of their own provinces?

John Adams, whose New England blood was of the oldest, has a good deal to say about them. "Our New England people are awkward and bashful, yet they are pert, ostentatious and vain; a mixture which excites ridicule and gives disgust." In another place he writes of "the mean cunning which disgraces so many of my countrymen." In others he tells of their debauches at taverns and dram-shops, to be found "at every corner of the town," where "carousings and swearing" are indulged in, and where are begotten "bastards and legislators;" of their corruption and venality, whereby "men who are totally ignorant of all law, human and divine, were elected representatives of the people" to the dread of the "virtuous few." All of which, he asserted, caused the people of New England "to lose the natural dignity and freedom of English minds."*

These reflections were recorded prior to and during the agitation for independence. That the fervent fires of the Revolution did not purge his New England brethren from the dross of intemperance and idleness he testified half a century later. At that time he wrote: "The number of licensed houses, drams, grog and sotting are not diminished, and remain to this day as deplorable as ever. You may as well preach to the Indians against rum as to our people."†

But "the masses" of the South, what of them? Of some of them, his near neighbors, Colonel Byrd writes: "They pay no tribute, either to God or Cæsar," and otherwise gives a very unlovely picture of his fellow-provincials.² From foreign travellers we hear of habits indulged in by the lower classes of the South almost too shocking for belief; habits that the "lesser breeds" would be ashamed to indulge in.

*John Adams' *Works*, Vol. II., pp. 84, 122, 123, 126, 345; *Familiar Letters*, p. 207.

†John Adams' *Works*, Vol. IX., pp. 637, 638.

AMERICAN PATRIOTISM AND SELF-SEEKING

We hear much of “eye-gouging,” which they practised even in their “friendly” scuffles, and of another habit so gross as only to be expressed by a metaphor.³

“The masses” of the provinces of New York and Pennsylvania seem to have been a more orderly and law-abiding people; especially the first-named. But as New York was a loyal province, and Pennsylvania nearly so, with these we have less to do.

Certainly it is not to be supposed that this testimony to the character of the colonists was ever meant to apply to the whole of the inhabitants of any one of the provinces. Undoubtedly, in the North there were men of honor and probity who would have been a credit to any race or nation. In the South there were men of culture possessed of no vices except the vices common to gentlemen of the age in which they lived. But to a large part of “the masses” of both sections it was meant to, and does apply; and it is of these “masses” that Mr. Bancroft and Mr. Hosmer make their boastful claim.

Perhaps it was a knowledge of this fact that caused Benjamin Franklin, in 1769, to complain that that “petty island” of Great Britain, “which, compared to America, is but like a stepping-stone in a brook, scarce enough of it above water to keep one’s shoes dry,” should “enjoy, in almost every neighborhood, more sensible, virtuous and elegant minds than we can collect in ranging a hundred leagues of our vast forests.”*

To which party did these “masses” adhere? Were they Loyalist or Disunion? To the latter, if we accept the testimony of one who crossed the seas to aid the Revolutionists, at the hazard of his life, and, therefore, if biased, should be biased in their favor.

The Count de Fersen wrote, of his Revolutionary friends: “*Ils sont les gens de la plus basse extraction, qui ne possédent point des biens.*” The Loyalists, he

*Benjamin Franklin to Mary Shaw, March 25, 1763: *Writings*, Vol. VII., p. 246.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

declared, "*sont les gens d'une classe plus distinguée, les seuls qui eussent des biens dans la pays.*"*

This classification is too broad, for we know that there were, at least, some exceptions.

As nearly all this testimony applies to the periods before and during the Revolution, perhaps that "portentous transaction" worked a miraculous change in the habits and sentiments of the colonists. Perhaps thereafter the purest patriotism and self-abnegation prevailed among "the masses."

As to this we may take the testimony of the most illustrious of all Americans.

In the summer of 1775, on taking command of the Continental army, General Washington found that "confusion and discord reigned in every department, which in a little time must have ended in the separation of the army, or fatal contests with one another." Soon he saw "the utmost reason to suspect irregularities and impositions" among those in command; men "so basely sordid as to counteract all our exertions for the sake of a little gain." With this "base and pernicious conduct" of the officers was combined the no less base conduct of their men, for there were many "infamous desertions" among them, the greater part of the remainder being "in a state not far from mutiny" because of a delay in their payment. Though an immediate attack from General Howe was expected, some of them were "resolved to go off;" while it was feared that the expected attack would be successful because of the "dissatisfaction" of the troops in general, "the true state of the temper and disposition of the soldiers" having been revealed to the British general. Wherefore Washington deplored the "egregious want of public spirit" of his fellow-colonists, who, "instead of pressing to be engaged in the cause of their country," were deserting it in its hour of danger.⁴

So began Washington's acquaintance with the Revolutionary army. After some six months of experience as

**Lettres du Compte de Fersen*, pp. 40, 41.

AMERICAN PATRIOTISM AND SELF-SEEKING

its commander-in-chief, he was brought to lament the hour in which he had consented to guide its destinies. During the winter of the same year, to a correspondent he complained:

"Such a dearth of public spirit and such a want of virtue, such stock-jobbing and fertility in all the low arts to obtain advantages of one kind or another, in this great change of military arrangement, I never saw before, and pray God's mercy that I may never be witness to again. . . . And such a mercenary spirit pervades the whole that I should not be surprised at any disaster that may happen. . . . Could I have foreseen what I have experienced, and am likely to experience, no consideration upon earth should have induced me to accept this command."* After some three years of similar experience, Washington declared:

"If I were called upon to draw a picture of the times and men, from what I have seen, heard, and in part know, I should in one word say that idleness, dissipation and extravagance seem to have laid fast hold of most of them; that speculation, peculation and an insatiable thirst for riches seem to have got the better of every other consideration, and almost of every order of men; that party disputes and personal quarrels are the great business of the day; whilst the momentous concerns of an empire, a great and accumulating debt, ruined finances, depreciated money, and want of credit, which in its consequences is the want of everything, are but secondary considerations, and postponed from day to day, from week to week, as if our affairs wore the most promising aspect. . . . Speculation, peculation, engrossing, forestalling, with all their concomitants, afford too many melancholy proofs of the decay of public virtue. . . . Is the paltry consideration of a little wealth to individuals to be placed in competition with the essential rights and liberties of the present generation and millions yet unborn? . . . And shall

*Letter to Joseph Reed, November 28, 1775: *Writings*, Vol. III., pp. 178, 179.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

we, at last, become victims of our own lust and gain?" A few months later he wrote: "Alas! virtue and patriotism are almost extinct! Stock-jobbing, speculating, engrossing, seem to be the great business of the day and of the multitude, while a virtuous few struggle, lament and suffer in silence."*

These "new forms of virtue," and equally new "fidelity to principle," pervading the masses of the people he had come to save from British misgovernment, and to enable them to "govern themselves," did not please Washington. His wrath was great and unrepressed; his complaints loud and frequently uttered. Not only during the course of the Revolutionary War, but thereafter, during his two terms as President of the new republic; even, at intervals, almost to the day of his death, the correspondence of Washington teems with fulminations against the venality, selfishness, turbulence, lawlessness and want of principle and patriotism of his fellow-colonists and fellow-citizens.

The number of those who "basely deserted the cause of their country" increased enormously and became "astonishingly great." There was "exceeding great lukewarmness" among the patriotic colonists in enlisting, and those who did enlist, as soon as their time expired, were generally "seized with a desire for returning into a chimney-corner." Many grew "tired out," and "almost professed an abhorrence for the service." Others professed themselves unable to do duty, but regained perfect health upon the administration to them of "that grand specific, a discharge!" "The recruiting service seemed to be at an end," and the officers, like their men, were loath "to abandon their comfortable quarters and take the field." And "no day, scarce an hour, passed without the offer of a resigned commission." "The spirit of resigning," Washington wrote, in the summer of 1779, "is now become almost uni-

*Letters to Benjamin Harrison, December 30, 1778; to James Warren, March 31, 1779; to Henry Laurens, November 5, 1779: Washington's *Writings*, Vol. VI., pp. 151, 152, 210, 211, 379.

AMERICAN PATRIOTISM AND SELF-SEEKING

versal. Every expedient that could operate upon their hopes, their patriotism, or their honor has been exhausted. The regiments, for want of a sufficient number of officers, and for want of zeal of the few that remain, are dwindling to nothing." On more than one occasion Washington expressed a fear of a "total dissolution of the army."^s

Desertions from the crews of the American war-vessels—most unfairly, it would seem—also became a source of "inexpressible plague, trouble and vexation" to Washington. "I do believe there is not on earth a more disorderly set,"* he complained of these men.

Abhorrence of the service was not confined to those who had had experience of it; it was the general sentiment of the colonists. Less than two years after the breaking out of hostilities, Washington saw "symptoms" which led him to believe "that the people of America are pretty generally weary of the present war."^t

This reluctance to sacrifice themselves for the good of their country was the prevalent sentiment among the fervent patriots who had been so eager to fight for their "rights." When asked to enlist, Washington tells us, they would declare, "they 'may as well be ruined in one way as another,' and with difficulty they are obtained." So eager were they to accept the protection of the British that, at one time, Washington feared "a systematical submission." Upon the occupation of the territory of New Jersey by the King's troops, he tells us, the inhabitants, "either from fear or disaffection, almost to a man refused to turn out" to help expel them; but, instead, "are making submission as fast as they can." It was the same in Pennsylvania. Indeed, throughout the war similar conditions prevailed. No

*Washington to Joseph Reed, November 20, 1775; to the President of Congress, December 4, 1775: Washington's *Writings*, Vol. III., pp. 168, 187.

†Letter to John Banister, April 21, 1778: *Writings*, Vol. V., p. 324.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

sooner was a state occupied by the British arms than the desire to submit and take the oath of allegiance became epidemic. That these obligations afterwards many times were violated by the jurors does not testify any more highly for their patriotism.*

These experiences caused Washington to indulge in some moral reflections. Already, as early as the winter of 1776, he had written to the Congress: "When men are irritated and their passions inflamed, they fly hastily and cheerfully to arms; but after the first emotions are over, to expect among such people as compose the bulk of an army, that they are influenced by any other principles than those of interest, is to look for what never did, and I fear never will happen. . . . A soldier is reasoned with upon the goodness of the cause he is engaged in, and the inestimable rights he is contending for, hears you with patience, and acknowledges the truth of your observations, but adds that it is of no more importance to him than to others. The officer makes you the same reply, with this further remark, that his pay will not support him, and he cannot ruin himself and family to serve his country when every member of the community is equally interested and benefited by his labors. The few, therefore, who act upon principles of disinterestedness, comparatively speaking, are no more than a drop in the ocean."†

Again, in the spring of 1778, Washington is compelled to moralize upon human inconsistency and irresolution. "Men may speculate as they will," he wrote; "they may talk of patriotism; they may draw a few examples from ancient story of great achievements performed by its influence, but whoever builds upon them as a sufficient basis for conducting a long and bloody war will find

*Washington to the President of Congress, December 5, 1776; to Governor Trumbull, December 12, 1776; to J. A. Washington, December 18, 1776; to General Schuyler, March 12, 1777: *Writings*, Vol. IV., pp. 204, 212, 231, 360.

†Washington to the President of Congress, September 24, 1776: *Writings*, Vol. IV., p. 111.

AMERICAN PATRIOTISM AND SELF-SEEKING

himself deceived in the end. . . . I will venture to assert that a great and lasting war can never be supported on this principle alone. It must be aided by a prospect of interest or some reward.”*

Washington had become thoroughly disillusioned. Instead of men who were eager to offer their lives and property upon the altar of their country, he had to deal with those who were selfishly desirous of conserving their own interests regardless of the welfare of their fellows; men who were ready to shift their allegiance according as success or failure attended his efforts. And these were the men by whose means he was to accomplish a revolution and give birth to a new nation. If these were the “invincible sons of the earth,” who, in the opinion of Chatham and Burke, rather than submit to the pretensions of Parliament would retire into the forests and rejoice in their liberty, or retreat to mountain fastnesses, there to become hordes of Tartars swooping down with irresistible force upon the Loyalist population of the maritime provinces, they must have acquired a far milder temperament with remarkable celerity. If these were the wolves that the ministers had mistaken for sheep, it must be admitted that, at times, they could assume so sheep-like an aspect as to justify the error.

The fact is, the ardor for warlike opposition to the Government, exalted to a high pitch by the exhortations of the Disunion chiefs, soon subsided. When these leaders, bent upon independence, began their propaganda, they set about preparing the minds of the adventurous, the dissatisfied, the unthinking and over-zealous for the coming change, and one very effective method was to assert that no change was desired or intended, but that a change for the worse was intended by the Home Government. Under the stimulus incited by these means, they found opportunity to raise a cry of tyranny and oppression, and to declare that if no resist-

*Letter to John Banister, April 21, 1778: *Writings*, Vol. V., p. 322.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

ance were made, the colonists, one and all, were doomed to perpetual slavery.

In these attempts to stir up the passions of the people the Disunion chiefs were powerfully aided by the New England clergy, who loudly echoed the cry of tyranny and predicted direful results to their flocks if they did not forcibly resist the attempts to enslave them. At an early period of the war, one of these ministers of the Prince of Peace, taking as his text the ferociously cruel and denunciatory words, "Cursed be he that holdeth back his hand from blood," pictured the awful sufferings that the colonists, the young and old, the helpless and infirm, were doomed to endure should Great Britain regain control of their country. Looking into the future with a prophetic eye, he saw them "toiling and covered with sweat to cultivate the soil; . . . in rags, bearing burdens and drawing water for these haughty lords [the British], and then cringing to them for a morsel of bread." These miserable beings, he declaimed, in tones of despair, "are (O gracious God, support my spirits!)—they are my sons and daughters, . . . loaded with irons, and dragging after them, wherever they go, the heavy, galling chains of slavery. . . . They sink in despair under the load. They see no way, they feel no power, to recover themselves from this pit of misery, but pine away and die in it, and leave to their children the same wretched inheritance."*

It might be supposed that such a picture as this, as nonsensical as it is bombastic and malignant, would have failed to influence the colonists, men of supposed intelligence and education. But the fact is that the rank and file of the Disunion party were not intelligent. Not only were they uneducated themselves, but they had little respect for education in others, and entrusted the management of their affairs, often, to men as unintelligent as themselves. Therefore it was that some of the most ignorant of their class were elected to official

*Nathaniel Whitaker, *An Antidote against Toryism*, pp. 24, 25.
108

AMERICAN PATRIOTISM AND SELF-SEEKING

positions of trust and honor.⁶ Even in the New England provinces, illiteracy was common and intelligence was not the rule. That credulity which, half a century before, caused them to believe that harmless and half-demented old women were in league with the Prince of Darkness, now induced them to put faith in stories nearly as visionary and still more harmful.

Among these people such a discourse must have had the effect of raising their passions to a pitch of madness. To them the picture was real. "Slavery" to them meant, not political or doctrinal slavery, but actual slavery such as was endured by the black and white slaves they saw around them. To such a condition they saw themselves reduced. It was this belief that roused in them that evanescent spirit of reckless courage testified to by Earl Percy as existing among the "Minute Men," some of whom advanced to the attack "though morally certain of being put to death in an instant."*

But this belligerent spirit was exhibited by few, soon subsided, and gave place to lukewarm indifference and to the unpatriotic conditions observed by the commander-in-chief of the Revolutionary army.

The "base and pernicious conduct" of the officers complained of by Washington did not diminish. Some of them embezzled money received by them for the payment of their men. Many of the regimental surgeons Washington declared to be "very great rascals, countenancing the men in sham complaints to exempt them from duty, and often receiving bribes to certify indisposition, with a view to procure discharges or furloughs," and disposing for their own profit of medicines procured at the cost of the people for administration to sick and wounded soldiers. Both officers and men engaged in plundering the peaceful inhabitants, without regard to their political affiliations. Whig and Tory alike suffered from the depredations of these patriotic marauders. "No man," declared Washington, "was secure in his effects, and scarcely in his person."

*Earl Percy's account of the retreat from Lexington.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

In a general order condemning this practice he asserted that the British were "exceedingly careful to restrain every kind of abuse of private property, whilst the abandoned and profligate part of our own army, lost to every sense of honor and virtue, as well as their country's good, are, by rapine and plunder, spreading ruin and terror wherever they go, thereby making themselves infinitely more to be dreaded than the common enemy they are come to oppose." These men, Washington declared, were guilty of "robbery and even murder," and though he had used "his best endeavors to stop this horrid practice," he "might almost as well attempt to move Mount Atlas."*

To work a reform Washington proposed to engage in the army as officers such as had "just pretensions to the character of gentlemen," in the place of those who had so disgraced his command. Not that he expected even these gentlemen to risk their lives for the love of their country alone. Very early in his experience he had declared, "There must be some other stimulus besides love for their country to make men fond of the service." This stimulus must take the form of "good pay." This, he believed, "will induce gentlemen and men of character to engage." As a further stimulus to patriotic effort he proposed that they should be granted half-pay for life. "They will not be persuaded to sacrifice all views of present interest," he declared, "in defence of this country unless she will be generous enough on her part to make a decent provision for their future support."†

Not a very "strangely elevated" sort of patriotism, this.

*Washington to the President of the Council of Massachusetts, August 7, 1775; to the President of Congress, September 24, 1776; to Governor Livingston, January 24, 1777; to General Lincoln, April 27, 1777: *Writings*, Vol. III., p. 55; Vol. IV., pp. 112, 116, 118, 119, 296, 402.

†Washington to the President of Congress, September 24, 1776; to Patrick Henry, October 5, 1776; to Col. George Baylor, January 9, 1777; to John Banister, April 21, 1778: *Writings*, Vol. IV., pp. 111, 138, 269, 321.

AMERICAN PATRIOTISM AND SELF-SEEKING

With the common soldier Washington had a less conciliatory method of dealing. "There can be no absolute security for the fidelity of this class of people," he declared, and, therefore, some sort of coercion must be used to enforce obedience. At an early stage of the war he had recommended an increase in the bounties offered for enlistments, and this expedient was tried. But it was soon found that "the effects of granting extravagant bounties" was that "the men are taught to put a price on themselves." In fact, the constant advance in the amount of bounties increased the very difficulty it was intended to obviate. One of the States gave "a thousand pounds (currency) for a few months," and one, Massachusetts, sent to his army some children, "hired at about fifteen hundred dollars for nine months' service." The result of this lavish expenditure was to retard rather than to expedite enlistments; for those disposed to enlist were apt to delay in the hope that, State bidding against State, still larger bounties would fall to their share. It produced, too, another evil, that practice which afterwards prevailed so extensively during the War of Secession, and then styled "bounty-jumping." "Many soldiers, lately enlisted in the Continental army," Washington proclaimed, "not content with the generous bounties and encouragements granted to them by Congress, but influenced by a base regard to their own interests, have re-enlisted and received bounties from other officers, and then deserted."*

Very early in the war Washington advocated conscription, as "the only probable mode now left us for raising men." He was convinced, too, that the best method of dealing with the common soldier was that practised in European armies, based on corporal punishment. This system, indeed, he had put in practice from

*Washington to Governor Livingston, February 19, 1780; to the President of Congress, September 24, 1776; to Governor Cooke, April 3, 1777; Proclamation, April 6, 1777; Letters to President Reed, July 12, 1779; to Alexander Spotswood, April 30, 1777: *Writings*, Vol. IV., pp. 112, 375, 379; Vol. VI., pp. 312, 471.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

the period of his taking command. We are told by Chaplain Emerson, who joined the army a few weeks afterwards, that even then "every man was made to know his place, or be tied up and receive thirty or forty lashes." Later the severity of this form of punishment was greatly increased, Washington ordering the infliction of as many as "five hundred lashes" for some forms of offences. Capital sentences, too, he tells us, became more frequent in the American service than in any other.*

It is evident that the commander-in-chief of the armies of the Revolution lacked the sublime faith in the abilities, good intentions and patriotism of the "insurgent husbandmen" possessed by its chronicler, historian Bancroft.

After other expedients—one of which was the enlistment of negro slaves by one of the New England provinces—had been tried and failed, the suggestions of Washington were adopted. The officers were granted their half-pay, and a conscription was ordered. And though there were constant evasions of the law,† the last named expedient helped much to keep an army in the field.

The Disunion cause was won. The dependent colonies became independent States; the goal of their desires was reached, yet all was not well. The new States could no longer quarrel with the Home Government, and if they quarrelled at all, must perforce quarrel among themselves. This they did with an acrimony hardly less ardent than that exhibited on the earlier occasion. "We look with indifference, often with hatred, fear and aversion, to the other States," wrote Fisher Ames in 1782. This grieved Washington, who

*Washington to Governor Cooke, December 5, 1775; to the General Court of Massachusetts, January 16, 1776; to the President of Pennsylvania, October 17, 1777; to the President of Congress, April 23, 1778; February 3, 1781: *Writings*, Vol. III., pp. 188, 246, 491; Vol. V., pp. 97, 336; Vol. VII., p. 387.

†Washington to the Committee of Congress, January 15, 1779; to Landon Carter, May 30, 1778; MS. letter to Governor Cooke, February 3, 1778: *Writings*, Vol. V., p. 338; Vol. VI., pp. 152, 330.

AMERICAN PATRIOTISM AND SELF-SEEKING

wished to see them united in fact as well as in name. He complained of their unreasonable jealousies, each of the others, and all of the Congress; declaring that if there were not a change in the system the result would be "our downfall as a nation. This is as clear to me as A B C, and I think we have opposed Great Britain to very little purpose if we cannot conquer our prejudices,"* he complained.

"Internal dissensions and jarrings with our neighbors"; "individual States opposing the measures of the United States; States encroaching upon the territory of one another, and setting up old and obsolete claims;" all this Washington characterized as "shameful and disgusting," and added: "In a word, I am lost in amazement when I behold what intrigue, the interested views of desperate characters, ignorance and jealousy of the minor part, are capable of effecting."†

These "internal dissensions," that culminated in an insurrection, incited in the mind of Washington the extremity of indignation: "What, gracious God, is man," he wrote to a friend, "that there should be such inconsistency and perfidiousness in his conduct? . . . The thing is so unaccountable that I hardly know how to realize it, or to persuade myself that I am not under the influence of a dream." His friend Greene, he thought, was "happy in his death, since he did not live to see such anarchy."‡

The insurrection was suppressed, but the fierce party dissensions continued, until they merged into the saturnalia of the "Democratic Societies" and the "Whiskey Rebellion," in 1793. On one occasion Washington declared that the majority of the people of a New Eng-

*Fisher Ames' *Works*, Vol. I., p. 113. Washington to Benjamin Harrison, January 18, 1784: *Writings*, Vol. IX., p. 12.

†Washington to Governor Clinton, November 25, 1784; to R. H. Lee, December 14, 1784; to William Grayson, July 26, 1786; to Henry Lee, October 31, 1786: *Writings*, Vol. IX., pp. 68, 178, 203, 204.

‡Washington to David Humphreys, December 26, 1786; to Henry Knox, December 26, 1786: *Writings*, Vol. IX., pp. 221, 225.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

land state had "bid adieu long since to every principle of honor, common sense and honesty;" in one of the South, that "the public mind was irritable, sour and discontented." After he had occupied the Presidential chair for a year he became convinced that the conduct of the people "must soon bring us back to our former disreputable condition." Two years later there are more "internal dissensions," that are "harrowing and tearing our vitals," and "newspaper abuse," that is poured upon him and the other officers of the Government. The times are "lawless and outrageous." "I see," he writes, "under a display of popular and fascinating guises, the most diabolical attempts to destroy the best fabric of human government and happiness that has ever been presented for the acceptance of mankind." He was of the opinion "that the daring and factious spirit which has arisen to overturn the laws and to subvert the constitution ought to be subdued. If this is not done there is an end of, and we may bid adieu to, all government in this country except mob and club government, from which nothing but anarchy and confusion can ensue;" and then "every man, or set of men, will, in that case, cut and carve for themselves."*

In the fall of 1795 we find Washington still looking forward to an approaching crisis and fearful of "anarchy and confusion." A year later he is complaining that his acts as Executive of the Government have been represented "in such exaggerated and indecent terms as could scarcely be applied to a Nero, a notorious defaulter, or even a common pickpocket." And two years later still, of "the malignant industry and persevering falsehoods"† with which he was assailed.

*Washington to Gouverneur Morris, October 13, 1789; to Daniel Stuart, June 15, 1790; to Jefferson, August 23, 1792; to Edmund Randolph, August 26, 1792; to Henry Lee, August 20, 1794; to General Morgan, October 8, 1794: *Writings*, Vol. X., pp. 30, 98, 280, 287, 428, 439, 440.

†Washington to Patrick Henry, October 9, 1795; to Jefferson, July 6, 1796; to Benjamin Walker, January 12, 1797: *Writings*, Vol. XI., pp. 82, 139, 183.

AMERICAN PATRIOTISM AND SELF-SEEKING

The close of Washington's second administration was now at hand, and two years later his life was to end. Perhaps enough of his testimony to the character of the new forms of virtue evolved by the American Revolution has been adduced. But a few corroborative statements from other sources may be added.

A few weeks after the declaration of independence we find John Adams—then in the midst of his triumphant Disunion colleagues—complaining that he had seen little of the “pure flame of patriotism,” but “much of the ostentation and affectation of it.” About the same time he declared that “a more exalted love of their country must be excited among the people of the new states, or they “would perish in infancy.” “I fear,” he added, “there is an infinity of corruption in our elections already crept in. . . . Thus we are sowing seeds of ignorance, corruption and injustice.” A little later: “The spirit of venality,” he writes, “is the most dreadful and alarming enemy America has to oppose. It is as rapacious and insatiable as the grave. This predominant avarice will ruin America, if she is ever ruined. If God Almighty does not interfere by His grace to control this universal idolatry to the mammon of unrighteousness, we shall be given up to the chastisements of His judgments.”*

Again, after his fellow-citizens had enjoyed some nine months of “self-government,” Mr. Adams wrote: “There is one enemy who, to me, is more formidable than famine, pestilence and the sword. I mean the corruption which is prevalent in so many American hearts.

. . . I have very often been ashamed to hear so many Whigs [Disunionists] groaning and sighing with despondency and whining out their fears that we must be subdued unless France should step in.” “I am more sick and more ashamed of my own countrymen than

*John Adams to Abigail Adams, August 18, 1776; to Samuel H. Parsons, August 19, 1776; to Joseph Hawley, August 25, 1776; to Abigail Adams, October 4, 1776: *Works*, Vol. IX., pp. 432, 435; *Familiar Letters*, pp. 214, 232.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

ever I was before. . . . The gloomy cowardice of the times is intolerable in New England. . . . I am wearied to death with the wrangles between military officers, high and low. They quarrel like cats and dogs. They worry one another like mastiffs, scrambling for rank and pay like apes for nuts.”*

This is the testimony of Mr. Adams concerning the sentiments and habits of his fellow-Disunionists in America. But it seems that they did not discard them when abroad. When in Paris, in 1779, he wrote: “All the infernal arts of stock-jobbing, all the voracious avarice of merchants, have mingled themselves with American politics here.”†

Twenty years later, shortly after his inauguration as President of the United States, Mr. Adams wrote to his friend Elbridge Gerry, referring to some of his patriotic brethren, who had made their patriotism so profitable that they were then “rolling in wealth,” though they had begun their services to their country “without any visible means,” and adding: “The want of principle in so many of our citizens, which you mention, is awfully ominous to our elective government. Want of principle seems to be a recommendation to popularity and influence. The avarice and ambition which you and I have witnessed for these thirty years is too deeply rooted in the hearts and education and examples of our people ever to be eradicated.”‡

Joseph Reed, the Adjutant-General of the Revolutionary army, wrote of “almost every villainy and rascality” that was “daily practised with impunity” by its officers; and of “the low and dirty arts which many of them practise to filch the public of more money.”§

*John Adams to William Gordon, April 8, 1777; to James Warren, April 27, 1777; to Abigail Adams, April 20, 1777; to Abigail Adams, May 22, 1777: *Works*, Vol. IX., pp. 461, 462; *Familiar Letters*, pp. 263, 276.

†John Adams to Abigail Adams, February 20, 1779: *Familiar Letters*, p. 356.

‡Randall’s *Life of Jefferson*, Vol. III., pp. 602, 603.

§*Life of Joseph Reed*, Vol. I., p. 213.

AMERICAN PATRIOTISM AND SELF-SEEKING

James Lovell, a prominent member of the Congress, in 1778 wrote: "Scarce an officer, civil or military, but feels something of a desire to be concerned in mercantile speculations. . . . We are almost a continental tribe of Jews."*

David Ramsay, surgeon, and historian of the War of the Revolution, too, testifies that during its course "truth, honor and justice were swept away by the overflowing deluge of legal iniquity." And Noah Webster tells us that during that period "not less than twenty thousand men in America left honest callings and applied themselves to this knavish traffic"† of speculating on the needs of their countrymen.

So much for the testimony of native Americans. Of foreigners there is that of Count de Fersen, from whose letters some quotations have been made; and that of another French officer, also engaged in the cause of the Revolutionists, whose letter to a friend in France was intercepted and translated by the British authorities.

The former writes that: "*Le plus grand nombre [of the colonists] ne pensent qu' à leur intérêt personnel,*" and adds: "*Ils sont d'une cupidité sans égale. . . . Je parle de la nation en général.*" The latter that: "The spirit of enthusiasm in defence of liberty does not exist among them; there is more of it for the support of America in one coffee-house in Paris than is to be found in the whole continent."‡

Yet it was of these times and of these people that Daniel Webster spoke when he said: "No man sought or wished for more than to defend and to enjoy his own. None hoped for plunder or for spoil. Rapacity was unknown to it!"§ And it was that same illustrious

*James Lovell to the Commissioners at Paris, March 24, 1778: *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, Vol. III., p. 518.

†Ramsay's *History of the Revolutionary War*. Noah Webster's *Essays*, p. 105.

‡*Lettres du Compte de Fersen*. Intercepted letter transmitted to Lord Shelburne in May, 1778. *Lansdowne Papers*, cited by Lecky.

§Daniel Webster, in his Bunker Hill speech.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

statesman who exhorted his countrymen to refresh themselves at "those pure fountains of mutual esteem, common patriotism and fraternal confidence whose beneficent healing waters so copiously overflowed the land through the struggle of the Revolution and in the early days of the Government."* It is in these conditions that Mr. Bancroft and other acquirers of the Revolutionary Myth have discerned that benign tranquillity, those new forms of virtue, that fidelity to principle, that chivalry and unselfishness, that strange elevation of feeling and dignity of action, with which they have endowed the subject of their story.

It is evident that if the assertions of the Revolutionary chiefs be accepted as true, these claims are false and fraudulent, and that the virtues with which they have credited their heroes, to a conspicuous extent at least, were negligible quantities. Unless, indeed, virtue had taken on itself such a "new form" as to simulate the appearance of vice!

Equally unrecognizable is the chivalry and dignity of action as regards the relations of the Disunion chiefs. Dissensions, jealousies and animosities prevailed among them, not only during the period of the Revolution, but enduring, and even increasing, for many years thereafter. "From first to last," we are told by John Jay, "there was a most bitter party against Washington" among the members of the Congress.⁷ For the rest, Washington disliked John Adams, felt a hearty contempt for Monroe, and when he had discovered the nature of his intrigues against him, conceived a supreme scorn for Jefferson. Hamilton was not earnest in his love of Washington, from a belief in his "stony-heartedness;" John Adams he disliked, and for Jefferson his contempt was unmitigated and unrestrained. To John Adams Benjamin Harrison was "disgusting," Monroe was "stupid" and "malignant," and for a time, at least, he felt, and expressed, abhorrence of Jefferson. He disliked Hamilton, was envious of Franklin, and did

*Daniel Webster: Reply to Boston Address, April 9, 1850.

AMERICAN PATRIOTISM AND SELF-SEEKING

not love Washington. In short, it would be hard to name one of his colleagues (except his cousin Samuel, who never stepped in his way) to whom, at one time or another, the second President of the United States was not antagonistic. Almost the sole instance of unbroken accord between any two of the prominent chiefs of the American Revolution is that of John Jay and Gouverneur Morris, and they, in common, felt a thorough contempt for the "damned scoundrels in the Second Continental Congress."⁸

But, asks Mr. Roosevelt, "What European nation then brought forth rulers as wise and pure as our statesmen, or masses as free and self-respecting as our people?"* "The Americans of the Revolution," he admits, "were not perfect," but, "how their faults dwindle when we stand them side by side with their European compeers." "There was," he adds, "far more swindling, jobbing, cheating and stealing in the English army than in ours;⁹ which strikes one as rather a weak eulogy to be applied to his heroes. For did it not appear to Mr. Roosevelt as rather a flimsy foundation upon which to raise a superstructure of fame for a people claiming to justify a rebellion with the intent to replace a corrupt and tyrannical government with a just and virtuous one? And is Mr. Roosevelt sure of his ground when he exalts for wisdom and purity the Revolutionary Fathers above a Chatham, a Mansfield, a Rockingham, a Burke, and many other English statesmen of that age whose reputation for wisdom and purity has been unsmirched by time? They contended for "liberty"—or that which they acclaimed to be liberty. But, after all, is this evidence of unselfishness or purity, since they could not have bestowed it upon themselves without granting the boon to others? As for "the masses," it will be seen that their love of liberty was not manifested in such a way as to accord the boon to their fellow-colonists.

**Gouverneur Morris*, p. 82.



CHAPTER VII.

SOME CRIMES COMMITTED IN THE NAME OF LIBERTY.

WITH the evidence we have had of the antipathy of the Disunion leaders towards each other, it may well be doubted that they manifested any benignity in their treatment of their Loyalist opponents. And the facts justify the doubt.

In searching the records of the dealings of the Revolutionists with the Loyalists, we are confronted with a weary and sickening list of savage and cruel outrages inflicted by them on such of their fellow-colonists as refused to surrender their consciences into their keeping and to speak and act in accordance with their despotic commands.¹

In the opinion of Disunionists, a Loyalist had no rights. He stood prejudged and condemned by the laws they had set up for their own guidance—laws whose makers were self-appointed, whose administrators were the mob, and whose emblems were the tar-bucket and bag of feathers. It mattered not that the Loyalists desired the good of the whole community under the rule of law and order; they must pay the penalty for daring to differ from the mob and the mob's instructors.

"Wisely they spoke, and what was their reward?
The tar, the rail, the prison and the cord."*

From the beginning of the Disunion agitation we read of an ever-increasing list of whippings, tar-and-featherings, and other outrages of a still worse character, to

**Jonathan Odell, The Loyalist Poetry of the Revolution.*

CRIMES IN THE NAME OF LIBERTY

which the Loyalists were subjected. Men of culture and refinement were driven from their homes and forced to conceal themselves in holes and corners, or in the inhospitable forests, to escape from threatened indignities and violence. Their homes were plundered and sacked, the ladies of their families were insulted, and sometimes offered personal violence; even the innocent domestic animals of the offending Loyalist were tortured to glut the malice of these ruffianly upholders of the "rights of man" against their owner. Should he fall into their hands, he was subjected either to such treatment as threatened his life, or to such other humiliating outrage as, in the words of Daniel Leonard, who himself had been a mark for the vengeance of the patriotic rabble, was "more to be deprecated by a man of sentiment than death itself."* Or even—as at an early period of these persecutions happened to one Richard King, several times mobbed for the crime of being "*suspected of having a leaning towards the Government*"—actually driven insane.†

Age and infirmity, even impending death, brought no safety to those who, by the expression of their honest opinions, or by refusing to sign agreements which their consciences repudiated, had incurred the enmity of the Disunion chiefs. Several of the vilest of the outrages were committed upon the persons of aged and feeble gentlemen.‡

The law courts had been closed and Justice thrust from her seat. Instead were established self-appointed "committees," each of which combined the functions of judge, jury and executioner. Haled before such a tribunal, the suspected Loyalist was required to swear to and subscribe an abject recantation of his supposed opinions, and to promise thenceforth to govern himself

**Massachusettensis Letters*, Letter IV.

†John Adams to Abigail Adams, July 7, 1774: *Familiar Letters*, p. 20.

‡Among others, those committed upon Ropes, Foster and Williams.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

according to the directions of the committee. If he had the manliness to refuse these degrading obligations, either he was at once subjected to a humiliating punishment for his contumacy, or dismissed with the threat of its infliction hanging over his head, in the meantime being pointed out to the rabble as a worthy mark for their insults.

Sometimes these proceedings were varied by the whole committee, with the mob at their heels, visiting the home of the intended victim, where they proceeded at once to pronounce sentence and do execution.²

These conditions existed before the assembling of the Congress. As soon as that body—elected by less than a tithe of the population, merely as a deliberative assembly³—had usurped legislative and executive authority, over Disunion and loyal alike, the conditions grew still more grievous. Then—

“Committees and Conventions met by scores,
Justice was banished, Law turned out of doors.”*

These committees and their emissaries, claiming to act by the authority of the Congress, became ubiquitous. Secret and cunning as the Familiars of the Holy Inquisition, they entered without ceremony into the homes of those they chose to suspect of loyalty to the Empire, or against whom they cherished a spite, violating the sanctity of the ladies’ apartments, ransacking cupboards and desks for incriminating evidence, opening private communications, and cross-examining the inmates.⁴

Under these conditions it is not strange that one Loyalist should assert that the Congress had set up “a government for cruelty and ferocity not to be equalled by any but that in the lower regions, where the Prince of Darkness is president.”† Or that others should declare that the Disunionists, “under the pretence of being friends to liberty,” were “banditti,” and “more savage

**The Loyalist Poetry of the Revolution*, p. 53.

... †Harrison Gray in a letter to his brother. Van Tyne’s *Loyalists of the Revolution*, p. 258.

CRIMES IN THE NAME OF LIBERTY

and cruel than heathens, or any other creatures, and, it is generally thought, than devils."*

But it is not alone the Loyalists that have complained of these enormities. There was at least one, a citizen of the United States, a staunch supporter of the principles of the Revolution, and a believer in its necessity and justice, who joined in condemning them.

Lorenzo Sabine, in a noble passage in his book on the Loyalists, writes:

"What man was ever won over to the right by the arguments of mobbing, burning and smoking? Did the cause of America and human freedom gain strength by the deeds of the five hundred that mobbed Sheriff Tyng?

. . . Were the shouts of the excited multitude, and the crash of broken glass and demolished furniture, fit requiem for the dying Ropes? . . . Did Ruggles forget that the creatures which grazed his pastures had been painted, shorn, maimed and poisoned; that he had been pursued on the highway by day and night; that his dwelling had been broken open, and he and his family had been driven from it? . . . On whose cheek should be the blush of shame when the habitation of the aged and feeble Foster was sacked and he had no shelter but the woods; when Williams, as infirm as he, was seized at night, dragged away for miles, and smoked in a room with fastened doors and a closed chimney-top? What father who doubted, wavered and doubted still, whether to join or fly, determined to abide the issue in the land of his birth, because foul words were spoken to his daughters? . . . The warfare waged against persons in their homes and about their lawful avocations cannot be justified."[†]

But if, as suggests Mr. Sabine, the cause of America and human freedom was not advanced by such acts, at least the Disunion chiefs believed that their own cause

*Thomas Gilbert, colonel of a Loyalist regiment: *Sabine's Biographical Sketches*, p. 320. Force's *American Archives* (Fourth Series), Vol. I., p. 1057; Vol. II., p. 508.

[†]*Biographical Sketches*, pp. 76, 77.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

would be advanced thereby. Notwithstanding that it has been many times strenuously denied, the fact is evident to all who do not desire to be blinded to the truth, that these gentlemen deliberately prepared for and encouraged mob outrages as a means of terrorizing their opponents and paralyzing their action. In the same way, in another revolution, the Jacobins used the mob of Paris to terrorize the Girondins. "The Whigs" [Disunionists], wrote Daniel Leonard, "thought that mobs were a necessary ingredient in their system of opposition."* Sabine, in one instance, admitted that "distinguished men" directed mob outrages.† And what said one of the most exalted of the Disunion chiefs, an honored "Father of the Revolution," and a signer of the Declaration of Independence? His words are worth quoting, if only for the reason that Mr. Roosevelt has thought proper to quote an expurgated version of the letter in which they are contained, omitting every part thereof that shows the true sentiments of the writer at the time it was written.‡

The Disunion agitation was far advanced before Mr. Gouverneur Morris decided to join his fortunes with that party. While he was still in the ranks of the Loyalists, he wrote a letter to his friend, Richard Penn, also a Loyalist, of which the following is a part:

"Believe me, sir, freedom and religion are only watchwords. . . . The trouble in America during Grenville's administration put our gentry upon this *finesse*: They stimulated some daring coxcombs to rouse the mob into an attack upon the bounds of order and decency. These fellows became the Jack Cades of the day, the leaders in all riots, the bell-wethers of the flock. The reason of this manœuvre in those who wished to keep fair with the Government, and at the same time to receive the incense of the popular applause, you will readily perceive. On the whole, the shepherds

**Massachusetts' Letters*, Letter III.

†*Biographical Sketches*, p. 243.

‡*Gouverneur Morris*, pp. 31, 32.

CRIMES IN THE NAME OF LIBERTY

were not much to blame in a politic point of view. The bell-wethers jingled merrily and roared out 'liberty and property' and religion, and a multitude of cant terms, which everyone thought he understood and was egregiously mistaken. For, you must know, the shepherds kept the dictionary of the day, and, like the mysteries of the ancient mythology, it was not for profane eyes and ears. This answered many purposes; the simple flock put themselves entirely under the protection of these most excellent shepherds. By and by, behold a great metamorphosis without the help of Ovid or his divinities, but entirely effectuated by two modern genii, the god of ambition and the goddess of faction. . . . And now, to leave the metaphor, the heads of the mobility grow dangerous to the gentry, and how to keep them down is the question. While they correspond with other colonies, call and dismiss popular assemblies, make resolves to bind the consciences of the rest of mankind, bully poor printers, and exert with full force all their other tribunitial powers, it is impossible to curb them. . . . And if these instances of what with one side is policy, with the other perfidy, shall continue to increase and become more frequent, farewell aristocracy. I see, and see it with fear and trembling, that if the disputes with Britain continue, we shall be under the worst of all possible dominions. We shall be under the dominion of a riotous mob. It is the interest of all men, therefore, to seek for reunion with the parent state."*

Eventually the distinguished gentleman became convinced that the heads of the mobility could not be curbed, and, therefore, adopted the next best expedient of guiding them, doubtless in the hope of inducing them and the herd that followed to enter the fold of his beloved aristocracy, where they could be controlled. That in so doing he was obliged to adopt the methods of the devotees of the god of ambition and the goddess of fac-

*Gouverneur Morris to Richard Penn, May 20, 1774: Sparks' *Life of Gouverneur Morris*, Vol. I., p. 24.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

tion which he had condemned, I suppose, counted little in comparison with the end he had in view.

Inhuman and savage as were the persecutions of the Loyalists before the beginning of armed hostilities, after that event, when many of them had sought refuge in the British lines, these persecutions increased in ferocity. Imprisonments became more frequent, and the horrors of the rope and scaffold were added to those of the cart and the tar-barrel. At a very early period of the war, many Loyalists—among them youths and old men—were taken from their homes and carried to the insurgent camp, where they were forced to do menial work for the men in the ranks. Throughout its continuance, numerous bodies of men, and sometimes women and girls, accused of Loyalism, were marched long distances, often into another province, and there incarcerated in the common jail, on various frivolous charges; perhaps for accepting protection from the British, when, without it, they might have perished from hunger. The horrors of these jails have often been described; a hint of them is contained in a record of a meeting of the New York Disunion Convention, at which permission was given to the members to smoke, in order “to prevent bad effects from the disagreeable effluvia from the jail below.” But those imprisoned in these dungeons were happy in comparison with those incarcerated in the Simsbury Copper Mines, a place rivalling in evil repute the dreadful Black Hole of Calcutta, except that it was not so merciful in quickly ending the miseries of its inmates.⁵

Many Loyalists captured in action were hanged, in violation of the laws of war and of humanity. In an article published in *Rivington's Gazette*, in the summer of 1779, it was asserted that in almost every rebel newspaper there was to be found an account of the hanging of a Loyalist, the pretence being made that he was a thief or a spy. The spy charge was found to be very convenient, and was frequently used. It was easily made, and specious; a Loyalist found at his home, after he had visited the British lines, especially if that home

CRIMES IN THE NAME OF LIBERTY

was within the lines of the Revolutionary army, could be executed by the order of a drumhead court-martial, with some appearance of compliance with military law. Sabine's list, admittedly very imperfect, contains a record of twenty-seven such "executions."⁶

These atrocities brought inevitable retaliation. The Loyalists began to do execution upon their enemies without form of law. "You are the beginners and aggressors," wrote one of them on the corpse of his victim, "for by your cruel oppression and bloody actions you drove us to it."^{*}

Another method of taking the lives of Loyalists by a *pseudo*-legal method was the passage of acts by the legislatures of the several States, decreeing that any inhabitant thereof who enlisted in the British army, or gave aid and comfort to the British Government, was guilty of treason. And this was done in New York, a province overwhelmingly loyal, but made to appear Disunion by a handful of its citizens who, aided by invaders from other provinces, had usurped the government. Under the operation of these laws, the only resource left to the Loyalist to save his person and property was to take an oath of allegiance to the usurping government of his province, an oath that his soul abhorred. It was flippantly declared by the Disunionists that this was no grievance, since the Loyalist was not obliged to take the oath; that he could take his choice. "True," the Loyalist answered, "like the galley-slave, we have a choice—the oar or the lash!"[†]

As the proscribed persons included those who had never acknowledged any authority except their lawful government, the enactment of these statutes was a most audacious attempt to legalize wholesale murder. Yet several States began to put them in practice, and caused the arrest and imprisonment of men who had been guilty of no crime except that of neglecting to take the oath of allegiance to a usurping government. Prisoners of

**Biographical Sketches*, p. 620.

†*Life of Peter Van Schaak*, p. 112.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

war were arrested and delivered to the various committees and courts set up by the Disunionists, to be tried for their lives, and, in some cases, executed, upon the authority of these infamous laws. Washington, it is true, on one occasion protested against these proceedings, not on the ground of civil rights or humanity, but of policy. For, he argued, "by the same rule that we try them, may not the enemy try any natural-born subject of Great Britain taken in our service?" Of such, he added, significantly, "we have a greater number." Besides, he continued, "they [the Loyalists menaced with execution for treason] had not taken the oaths nor entered into our service." So, he concluded, their execution might "prove a dangerous experiment."^{*}

Apparently Washington, like the other Disunion chiefs, was unwilling to grant to his loyal fellow-citizens ordinary human rights. During the whole period of his command he uttered no word of sympathy or pity for these much injured people; but, on the contrary, expressed the harshest condemnation of them for cherishing a broader patriotism than his own. They were, he declared, "execrable parricides." On learning that "one or two" of them had taken their own lives—perhaps incited thereto by unbearable persecution—he remarked that it was "what a great number ought to have done long ago." He ordered many of them to be seized and confined, and threatened others with "a worse fate." Upon one occasion, however, he denounced the hanging of a Loyalist as "irregular and illegal."[†]

If the Loyalists received no sympathy or pity from Washington, none could be expected from the other Disunion chiefs, and none was accorded, but much condemnation.

*Washington to Governor Livingston, December 11, 1777: *Writings*, Vol. V., p. 183.

†Washington to William Palfrey, November 12, 1775; to General Gage, August 20, 1775; to J. A. Washington, March 31, 1776; to General Deborre, August 3, 1777; Order of Washington, January 21, 1777: *Writings*, Vol. III, pp. 66, 159, 343; Vol. IV., p. 290; Vol. V., p. 12.

CRIMES IN THE NAME OF LIBERTY

John Adams declared that they deserved extermination, and "strenuously recommended" the Disunion officials "to fine, imprison and hang all inimical to the cause, without fear or affection." And, in order, no doubt, to stimulate proper zeal for that "cause," he added: "I would have hanged my own brother if he had took a part with our enemy in this contest."

Certainly this is revolting to all sentiments of humanity. Perhaps even more so is the fact that the New England clergy, whose sacred office was to preach the gospel of peace and good-will to man, often, instead, preached the gospel of hate and murder. One of the worst examples of this impious perversion of a holy mission is that afforded by Nathaniel Whitaker, appropriately a minister of Salem, the seat of the persecution of the "witches," and whose words I have before quoted. This individual, whom Professor Tyler styles "an able and good man," in a sermon preached on the eve of the conclusion of peace, when one in whose breast was left unextinguished a spark of human feeling would have looked forward to the dissemination of sentiments of amity and the forgiveness of enemies; at this time, when the Loyalists were being harried and hunted by the dogs of malice and murder, this minister of the Prince of Peace, doing the work of the Father of Evil, exhorted his flock to "curse" the "Tories" with a "heavy curse." They were, he declared, "guilty of the sin of Meroz." "It is the command of God that, in cursing, we curse them."

After the restoration of peace, when, in accordance with the practice of civilized nations, it might have been expected that the several States would have passed acts of indemnity and oblivion—for even during the bloody Stuart *régime* liberal acts of this character were passed—a contrary policy prevailed. Loyalty was a crime for which there was no pardon. Acts of attainder and outlawry were heaped upon the statute-books. In Pennsylvania alone four hundred and ninety Loyalists were attainted for high treason, over four hundred of whom were expatriated. In Massachusetts three hundred and

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

ten were banished and their property confiscated. "And who were they?" asks Professor Tyler: "To anyone at all familiar with the history of colonial New England, that list of men, denounced to exile and loss of property on account of their opinions, will read almost like the beadroll of the oldest and noblest families concerned in the founding and upbuilding of New England civilization."*

The other States followed these cruel examples, and in consequence of these decrees of outlawry, together with some voluntary expatriation, the new States suffered the loss of some one hundred thousand citizens native to the soil; men of worth, culture, industry and humanity. But that which was the Republic's loss was the Empire's gain. The British ministers insisted on embodying in the treaty of peace with the triumphant newly-made sovereign States a provision obliging them to refrain from any further persecution of the Loyalists. Had this obligation been regarded, a large number of them would have remained in or returned to their native provinces, becoming, in due course, citizens of the new Republic. But it was not regarded; the persecutions and confiscations were renewed in all the States, in the face of this provision in the treaty; and because of this bad faith, Canada and other British territory in the Western hemisphere received an accession of at least sixty thousand souls, of whom Lord Bury writes: "It may safely be said that no portion of the British possessions ever received so noble an acquisition."† These men and their descendants, in later years, became the bulwark of the colonies against internal dissensions and foreign foes. All this would have been lost to the Empire had the stipulation of the ministry been carried out in good faith by the new States.

The banishment of the Loyalists by no means ended the persecutions. Necessarily a large number remained in their native land, many of them having been deprived of all means to leave. As soon as the evacuation of the

**Literary History*, Vol. I., pp. 302, 303.

†Bury's *Exodus of the Western Nations*.

CRIMES IN THE NAME OF LIBERTY

British troops had been completed, the whippings, tar-and-featherings, and dragging through horse-ponds were renewed with redoubled fury. Twenty-four Loyalists, it is said, were hanged at Charleston before the sails of the British troopships were low on the horizon.*

"The axe was not among the instruments of its accomplishment," exultantly declared Daniel Webster of the American Revolution. It was not; the halter was more convenient and quite as effective.

These post-bellum proscriptive acts, with their accompanying private acts of malice and revenge, aroused the indignation of Alexander Hamilton and John Jay, the latter denouncing them as "an instance of unnecessary rigor and unmanly revenge without a parallel except in the annals of religious bigotry and blindness."†

But, asserts Mr. Roosevelt, with an airy confidence that seems quite convincing: "That the Loyalists of 1776 were wrong is beyond question; . . . there is no doubt, not only that the patriots were right, but also that they were as a whole superior to the Tories."‡

Which, of course, disposes of the whole matter.

Perhaps enough has been written to cast a doubt on the assertion of Mr. Bancroft that benign tranquillity reigned in America during the progress of the Revolution. That historian fortifies his allegation by the simple means of avoiding all reference to any act of the Disunionists disparaging to their honesty, good faith and humanity. Although his own library contained abundant evidence of the facts, he avoids all reference to the animosities of the officers of the Revolutionary army, the desertions and insubordination of the men; the plunderings of friend and foe; the prevalent corruption; the readiness of the "patriots" to submit to the enemy whenever their party suffered defeat; their cruel persecution of their unfortunate fellow-colonists—of all this he knows nothing.

*See *Charleston Year Book*, p. 416.

†John Jay to Alexander Hamilton: Hamilton's *History of the United States*, Vol. III., p. 10.

‡*Gouverneur Morris*, p. 29.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

The people who, to Washington, were lacking in public spirit, were impatient of control, were idle, dissipated and extravagant, insatiable in their thirst for riches, quarrelsome and intriguants; in whom virtue and patriotism were almost extinct; whose corruption, greed and dishonesty caused the "virtuous few" to despair; who were prone to desert their chosen cause at every check it received—these men, Mr. Bancroft tells us, were "pious and contented, laborious, frugal," whose "rule for the government of conduct" was "the eternal law of duty," whose "vigor of will was never paralyzed by doubt." "The patriotism of the army," Mr. Bancroft assures us, "was so deep and universal that it gave no heed to doubts and altercations." At least, if there were any, they were confined to General Arnold and "a few New Yorkers." Arnold, as is proper to the Judas of the Revolutionary Myth, of course, was "quarrelsome and insubordinate."

Without any evidence but that afforded by Mr. Bancroft's History, we would suppose that the Loyalist party consisted of a few dozen Government officials, together with about the same number of ruffianly marauders. All we are told of outrages committed upon Loyalists is a distorted account of the attacks upon the venerable counsellors of Massachusetts, which, as related by Mr. Bancroft, appear to have taken the form of a mild admonition. An organized attack by the mob upon a Government vessel, during which a British officer was shot and dangerously wounded—an attack made under the express direction of Disunion leaders—is termed by Mr. Bancroft a "scuffle." In his dealings with mob outrages upon Loyalists, Mr. Bancroft surpasses himself, difficult as that may seem. The only instance of tar-and-feathering mentioned in his History is one of "an honest countryman," perpetrated by *British officers* for the offence of buying a firelock from a soldier!*

The encomium passed upon Daniel Defoe cannot fittingly be applied to Mr. Bancroft. Certainly he does not "lie like the truth."

**History of the United States*, Vol. IV., p. 490.

CHAPTER VIII.

LOYALTY AND PSEUDO-LOYALTY.

We are asked to believe that the Revolutionary chiefs and their followers, as well as the Loyalists, until forced by the acts of the British ministry to renounce their cherished dependence upon the mother country, nursed feelings of the staunchest loyalty to the Empire, and were wedded to the colonial relation. We are expected to believe that there was no such thing as a Disunionist in the whole of North America until such were manufactured by Messrs. Bute, Grenville and Townshend.

Though the facts in this regard have been confused by obscure references to "wavering opinions" and "growing convictions," supposed to have arisen in the minds of the colonists, there is no difficulty in assigning his proper part to each of the prominent actors on the Revolutionary stage. It is true there were a few, such as James Wilson, afterwards recognized as a thorough Disunionist, who, even as late as the summer of 1776, opposed a declaration of independence. But for such reasons alone such men should not be classed with those who honestly desired to maintain the British connection. All that these *pseudo*-Loyalists desired was that their colleagues should continue the shallow pretence of allegiance to the King with which they had begun their war against his authority, and which they had so long hypocritically maintained. They did not wish to halt on the road to independence, but only to hasten slowly, believing that policy to be the most effective means of reaching their goal. Besides, this profession of loyalty was "the golden leaf" that "concealed the treason,"¹ and might

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

stand them in good stead in case of an unexpected turn of affairs and possible prosecutions. In such a case they would have been prepared to plead that they had levied war, not against the King, but only against his ministers, a distinction of some neck-saving virtue.

It is true, too, that here and there there was one like John Dickinson, who, though from the beginning he was opposed to independence, yet remained with the Disunion party to the bitter end. But he, and those of similar opinions, had affiliated with that party in the belief that the intention of its leaders, like their own, was simply to obtain a redress of colonial grievances. They did not discover their error until it was too late to retreat, and so were drawn into apparent acquiescence of measures to which, in reality, they were actually opposed. Their condition was worthy of some sympathy, for on the one hand they were despised by the Loyalists as traitors, and on the other they forfeited the confidence of the Disunionists, who ever regarded them with suspicion as unwilling helpers.

Lastly, there were a few like Gouverneur Morris, who, after due deliberation, had joined his fortunes with the Disunionists, probably in the belief that they would triumph and his interest be the more secure under their protection.

But these exceptions count for little. The true test of the sentiments and opinions of the men of the Revolution is to be found in the part they took in the final contest.

The statement, then, so confidently made by the writers of America, and so credulously received and ratified by those of Great Britain—even by those best informed of the facts—that those Americans who were instrumental in severing the colonies from the Empire, equally with those who opposed that severance, regarded their alienation from the motherland “with bleeding hearts,” is a manifest absurdity. The pathetic recitals of Greene and others of the love and reverence cherished by the colonists, one and all, for the land of their fathers,

LOYALTY AND PSEUDO-LOYALTY

its government and people, has this basis, and no more; that before and at the period of the Revolution there were, ever since have been, and still are, many Americans cherishing a respect for the institutions of Great Britain and an affection for its people, and who were and are desirous of close and friendly relations with them. But these men have never affiliated with the self-declared ultra-patriots of the United States, but, on the contrary, have ever been condemned by them as in sentiment "un-American." During the Disunion propaganda and resulting revolt such as these were hated by the patriots as "Tories;" a generation later—when they sympathized with Great Britain in her supreme contest with Europe in arms—they were reviled by them as the "British faction;" to-day they are ridiculed as "Anglo-maniacs." These people were not, and are not, typical Americans. They have never had, and do not have, any political influence. They are exotics in their native land.

It was such men as these who were distressed at the thought of separation from the mother country, and braved insult, outrage and death in avowing their sentiments. But as they were ever opposed to that separation, their utterances should not be cited—as fraudulently they are—as evidence that those who planned it and accomplished it did so with reluctance and sorrow. The Disunion leaders—though they, too, when it served their purpose, professed profound respect for British institutions and undying affection for their British brethren—in reality looked upon the mother country and her people with changing feelings of hatred, contempt and indifference, the hatred and contempt varying with the varying manifestations of coercion and indulgence displayed by the Government; the indifference being a constant and abiding sentiment so long as the others were in abeyance. To paraphrase the statement of one of the most distinguished of them, they were not John Bulls, but Yankees, and there was no man in England they cared a farthing for.²

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

That the Disunion leaders were possessed with an ardent desire for colonial independence there can be no doubt. To what should this desire be attributed?

Briefly, to a fervent but narrow and circumscribed patriotism, combined with an inordinate ambition that impelled them to rule or ruin. This made them impatient of a political status that they had schooled themselves to regard as foreign control. "Is any man so base or so weak as to prefer a dependence on Great Britain to the dignity and happiness of living a member of a free and independent nation?"* demanded the chief organizer of the Disunion party. "A whole government of our own choice, managed by persons whom we love, revere and can confide in, has charms in it for which men will fight,"† declared his coadjutor and chief factotum.

Adam Smith, with a perspicacity possessed by few of his contemporaries, asserted that "the leading men of America" had "chosen to draw the sword in defence of their own importance." But, notwithstanding this insight into the true intent of these "leading men," Mr. Smith was greatly mistaken in his belief that a share in the management of Imperial affairs would be an irresistible bribe to them and a security for their continued loyalty. The fact is that their fealty and aspirations were entirely confined to their native land. Under this erroneous impression, Adam Smith proposed to reconcile the Disunion chiefs to Imperial rule by granting to the colonies a limited representation in Parliament. In this way, he argued, "a new method of acquiring importance, a new and more dazzling object of ambition would be presented to the leading men of each colony."‡ But of all the expedients for placating the malcontent colonists ever devised by Whig or Tory, this was the least likely to succeed so long as the Disunion leaders had

*Speech of Samuel Adams, August 1, 1776.

†John Adams to Abigail Adams, May 17, 1776: *Familiar Letters*, p. 173.

‡*Wealth of Nations*, Chap. VII., Part iii.

LOYALTY AND PSEUDO-LOYALTY

control of the situation. For the idea of Parliamentary representation was abhorrent to them. To men to whom the mother country had become an object of indifference as soon as her protecting arm against their encroaching French neighbors had become no longer necessary to their welfare; who had learned to look each upon his own province as his "country;" to whom the Empire was an abstraction, a place in its councils would have seemed more dim than dazzling. To them the granting of colonial representation appeared not as a boon, but a "danger."^{*}

At one time, indeed, such a prospect as that held out by Adam Smith seems to have had an allurement for Benjamin Franklin. Unlike his colleagues, he had been familiar with the greatness of Imperial concerns. Accordingly, we see him wavering in his allegiance to the Disunion cause, in the hope of being called to sit among the rulers of empire.³ But no such ambition disturbed the plans of his colleagues, who had no acquaintance with any land but their own, and who believed that the British Empire was doomed to destruction. Moreover, if a closer union were made with the motherland, logically they might expect to be called upon to contribute to the Imperial revenues, and to this they would by no means consent. It was argued that, in case of a continued union with the mother country, the colonies would be called upon to contribute to the expenses of wars in which they were not interested. Before the Peace of Paris such contributions as had been made by the colonies had been used exclusively for their benefit. Now, it was asserted, if any contributions were made, they would be used for the benefit of the Empire at large, for the interests of which they had no concern.

"Great Britain," said Gouverneur Morris, in a speech in the New York Provincial Congress, made shortly after he had abandoned the Loyalist party, "will not fail to bring us into a war with some of her neighbors, and then protect us as a lawyer defends a suit, the client

*Franklin to John Ross, December 13, 1767: Franklin's *Writings*, Vol. VII., pp. 370, 371.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

paying for it." Therefore, he declared, it was best to "get rid of the suit and the lawyer together."^{*}

Evidently such arguments were dishonest ones, for Mr. Morris, as well as his colleagues, well knew that the Home Government had never asked the colonies to pay more than a small part of their just proportion of the expenses of wars conducted in their interests, and had never required one farthing from them to pay the expense of any war with a European power in the result of which the colonists were not interested. Knowing this, they dared to assume that the Home Government would oblige them to pay an undue proportion of the expenses of wars in which they had no individual concern. Nevertheless, these arguments were very effective in prejudicing the colonists against a continued union with the mother country. Besides, the natural fear might have arisen among them that in case contributions were made by the colonies to the Imperial exchequer, if Great Britain were conquered by a European power the colonies would be involved in her ruin; whereas, if no such contributions were made, they might plead neutrality, as being connected with Great Britain only by the slender tie of allegiance to a common king.

Of course, such sentiments as these exhibit a total absence of affection or regard for the motherland in those who entertained them. The fact is, the interjacent stretch of ocean, the lapse of many generations, and the Imperial policy of "salutary neglect," so lauded by Burke and his colleagues, had made aliens of Britons, and—with some notable exceptions—not the least so of those of the purest British descent. "Colonies universally ardently breathe for independence. No man who has a soul will ever live in a colony." "There is something very unnatural and odious in a government a thousand leagues off,"[†] wrote John Adams.

*Speech of Gouverneur Morris in the Third Provincial Congress of New York, in June, 1776.

[†]Letter to William Tudor, June 17, 1818: *Works*, Vol. X., p. 321.

LOYALTY AND PSEUDO-LOYALTY

"It is intolerable that a continent like America should be governed by a little island three thousand miles away," echoed Walter Livingston. "Can there be any person whose mind does not revolt at the idea of a vast continent holding all that is valuable at the discretion of a handful of people at the other side of the Atlantic?"* asked Samuel Adams, their common chief.

These were the men whom Chatham exhorted the ministers to clasp in their "fond and affectionate arms," and assured them, if only this were done, they would "find them children worthy of their sire."†

This ignorance of the true sentiments of the dominant party in the colonies entertained by British statesmen was not shared by those of France, who had not been blinded by the insincere protestations of its chiefs. In 1763, the year of the ratification of the Peace of Paris, that removed from the colonies the fear of French aggression, the Count de Vergennes declared that he was "persuaded that England would not be long before she had reason to repent of having removed the only check that would have kept the colonies in awe."‡

But this was not the first insight obtained by Frenchmen into colonial conditions. More than thirty years before that time, Montesquieu had expressed his belief that England would be the first nation abandoned by her colonies. The Duc de Choiseul made a similar prediction, and, a few years later, Count d'Argensen predicted that one day they would rebel and form a republic. In 1750, too, Turgot, the able minister of Louis XV., prophesied that the colonies would proclaim their independence, comparing them to fruits that remained on the parent stem only until they ripened.⁴

Even in England all were not blind to the facts. Before the Peace of Paris was concluded, William

*Speech of Samuel Adams, August 1, 1776.

†Speech on "The Quartering of British Soldiers in Boston."

‡Remark made to Lord Stormont and repeated in a letter from Stormont to Lord Rochford, written in October, 1775. See Adolphus's *History of England*, Vol. II., p. 134.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Burke, in reply to a pamphlet of Lord Bath, who had advocated the annexation of Canada, warned the ministry that: "By eagerly grasping at too extensive territory we may run the risk, and that, perhaps, at no distant period, of losing what we now possess. . . . A neighbor who keeps us in some awe is not always the worst of neighbors." "In process of time," he predicted, the colonies "will know little, inquire little, and care little about the mother country."^{*}

This warning may have produced some effect; but, if so, that effect was destroyed by Franklin, who, in his famous *Canada Pamphlet*, assured the ministry that it was unreasonable to suppose that the colonies would ever rebel, not only because of their love for the mother country, but because of their hate for each other.[†] It is probable that this pamphlet decided the ministry to annex Canada. It is true that Franklin, in another pamphlet,[‡] written more than thirty years before, had expressed opinions entirely contrary to those expressed then; but it was the ardent desire of the colonists that the French should be banished from the continent, and it would have been doing poor service to his Disunion friends if Franklin had recalled those opinions at such a critical time.

There never was a time in the history of the British American colonies, from the landing of the "Pilgrim Fathers" to the declaration of independence, when there did not exist therein at least the nucleus of a Disunion party. The declarations of Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, John Jay, and other Disunion chiefs, that until within a few months before independence was declared, no wish for, or thought of, independence had ever entered into the mind of a single colonist, is an absurdity so gross as scarcely to need refutation. Indeed, it is refuted by the very men who

**Remarks on the Letter Addressed to Two Great Men.*

†*Franklin's Writings*, Vol. IV., p. 2, *et seq.*

‡"The State of the British Plantations in America," written in 1731-1732 in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*.

LOYALTY AND PSEUDO-LOYALTY

uttered it. We have seen that Franklin had declared that, of right and in fact, the colonies were independent states. This assertion he made years before he assured Lord Chatham, in 1774, that he "never had heard from any person, drunk or sober, the least expression of a wish for separation."* A few days after making *that* declaration, he assured his friend Josiah Quincy that he was for "total emancipation," to which assurance Quincy expressed his entire approval. The same desire was expressed by Richard Henry Lee, Livingston and others, besides John Adams, who has recorded his sentiments in that regard very clearly and exhaustively. Here is some of his testimony to that effect written at intervals during a period of more than a decade, testifying, not only to his own sentiments, but to those of his fellow-colonists and their progenitors:

"The idea of American independence, sooner or later, and of the necessity of it some time or other, was always familiar to gentlemen of reflection in all parts of America. . . . I think I may boast of my declaration of independence in 1755." "I have always laughed at the affectation of representing American independence as a novel idea, as a modern discovery, as a late invention. The idea . . . has been familiar to Americans from the first settlement of the country." "The claim of the 1776 men to the honor of first conceiving the idea of American independence, or of first inventing the project of it, is as ridiculous as that of Dr. Priestley to the discovery of the perfectibility of man. . . . It was more ancient than my nativity." "The Revolution was in the minds and hearts of the people . . . before hostilities commenced." "In my opinion it began as early as the first plantation of the country. Independence of Church and Parliament was a fixed principle of our predecessors in 1620, as it was of Samuel Adams and Christopher Gadsden in 1776, and . . . was always kept in view in this part of

*"Negotiations in London": Franklin's *Writings*, Vol. V., p. 7.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

the country [New England], and, I believe, in most others." "Independence of Church and State was the fundamental principle of the first colonization, has been its general principle for two hundred years. . . . Who, then, was the author, inventor, discoverer of independence? The only true answer must be the first emigrants."*

Is this corroborated by contemporary evidence? Let us see:

In 1637 an emissary of Archbishop Laud wrote to that prelate: "The colonies aim not at new discipline, but sovereignty. It is accounted treason in their General Court to speak of appeals to the King."† During the Commonwealth, we hear no more of independence from the New England colonies; but after the Restoration, the diarist John Evelyn, then one of the Lords of Trade, records that they were on the verge of renouncing their allegiance to the Crown.‡ This is not strange in a Puritan community, who, naturally, did not love the Stuarts; but it appears that, after the expulsion of that family, the desire for independence was as strong among them as before. Charles Davenant, in one of his political pamphlets, noted this desire, and declared that when the colonists became strong enough to contend with the mother country they would achieve independence, and that this had been the constant object in New England from its earliest infancy.‡

During the reign of Queen Anne, Governor Cornbury reported that these colonies were bent on independence; and, according to the statements of various officials, the same disloyal sentiments prevailed there during the reigns of the first two Georges. In 1720, Daniel Neal,

*John Adams to Benjamin Rush, May 1, 1807, May 21, 1807, and May 23, 1807; to Thomas Jefferson, May 29, 1818; to William Tudor, September 18, 1818: *Works*, Vol. IX., pp. 591-593, 596, 600; Vol. X., pp. 182, 313.

†Lawson's *Life and Times of Laud*.

‡*The Political and Commercial Works of Charles Davenant*, Vol. II.

LOYALTY AND PSEUDO-LOYALTY

in his *History of New England*, writes of a "state faction" there which was ambitious of usurping the powers of government. Near the same time, Jeremiah Dummer, in his *Defence of the Colonies*, admitted that there existed there a spirit of disunion. Later, Governor Shirley and Charles Wesley noted the same spirit. The latter, during his visit to the New England colonies in 1737, found "men of consequence almost continuously crying out that 'we must be independent. We shall never be well until we shake off the English yoke.'" James Maury wrote of the spirit of democracy and insubordination to the Government which had arisen in Virginia. Peter Kalm, who visited the colonies in 1750, became convinced that the presence of the French in Canada alone prevented a general demand for independence.*

A few years thereafter we find John Adams—who later denied the existence of a desire for independence, and still later affirmed it—predicting that the colonies would "set up for themselves," and "obtain the mastery of the seas," as soon as "the turbulent Gallics" were removed from the North American continent.† This was his "declaration of independence" proudly referred to by him in a letter previously quoted. In 1768 Andrew Elliott, himself a Disunionist, declared that though the colonies were "not ripe for disunion," a few years would make them so.

But under the heating process administered by his colleagues they were fast ripening. The sole interest felt by them in the British Government and people was related to the aid and protection they had received from British arms and the British exchequer. At the close of the Seven Years' War, the French being banished from the North American continent, the need for that

*John Wesley, *A Calm Address to the Inhabitants of England*. James Maury's *Memoirs of a Huguenot Family*. Peter Kalm, *Travels into North America*.

†John Adams to Nathan Webb, October 12, 1755: *Works*, Vol. I., p. 23.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

aid and protection had passed away, and their interest in Great Britain had ceased with it. So we see that that period synchronizes with the beginning of the agitation for independence. "No sooner were the French kites and the Indian vultures scared away than they began to strut and claim an independent property to the dunghill. Their fear and their natural affection forsook them at the same time,"* wrote a rough-mannered English pamphleteer. "Ever since the reduction of Canada we have been bloated with a vain opinion of our own importance,"† wrote an American Loyalist eight years later.

We now know that the fact of the continued Disunion sentiment existing in the colonies for so many years was a matter of official record in the office of the Board of Trade at the time of the annexation of Canada,⁶ yet, after the manner of British officialdom, no effort was made to refer to the data there contained, and Chatham and his colleagues remained unenlightened. Those who were familiar with the colonies, however, were better informed, as the following letter from General Gage to Lord Dartmouth, written in the summer of 1775, will show:

"The designs of the leaders of the rebellion are plain, and every day confirms the truth of what was asserted years ago by intelligent people, that a plan was laid in this province [Massachusetts] and adjusted with some of the same stamp in others, for total independence, while they amused the people in England called the friends of America, as well as many in this country, with feigned professions of affection and attachment to the parent state, and pretended to be aggrieved and discontented only on account of taxation; that they have designedly irritated Government by every insult, whilst they artfully poisoned the minds of the people and ripened them for insurrection. They would still deceive

**The Justice and Necessity of Taxing the American Colonies*, p. 7.

†*A Friendly Address to all Reasonable Americans*, p. 25.

LOYALTY AND PSEUDO-LOYALTY

and lull the mother country into a belief that nothing is meant against the nation, and that their quarrel is only with the ministry. But it is hoped that the nation will see through this falsehood and deceit. It matters not who hold the helm of state; the stroke is levelled at the British nation, on whose ruin they hope to build their so much vaunted American empire, and to rise like a phoenix out of the ashes of the mother country.

. . . I am to hope, from the affection I bear to my country, that no man in Great Britain or Ireland will be long deceived by fallacious professions and declarations, but see, through all the disguise, that this is no sudden insurrection in America, but a preconcerted scheme of rebellion, hatched years ago in the Massachusetts Bay, and brought to perfection by the help of adherents on both sides of the Atlantic. . . . People agree now that there has been a scheme for a revolt from the mother country, long conceived between those who have most influence in the American councils, which has been preparing the people's minds by degrees for events that, at first view, they regarded with horror and detestation. If the Boston Port Bill had not furnished a pretext for rebellion, something else would have brought it forward. . . . I am convinced that the promoters of the rebellion have no real desire for peace, unless they have a *carte blanche*. Their whole conduct has been one scene of fallacy, duplicity and dissimulation, by which they have duped many well-inclined people. . . . They have given out that they expect peace on their own terms, through the inability of Britain to contend with them; and it is no wonder that such reports gain credit with the people when letters from England and English newspapers give so much encouragement to rebellion."

Really this letter from this "British Alva" resembles in no small degree that from the patriot Gouverneur Morris, which is not so strange as it seems, since both of them were endeavoring to describe things as they actually appeared to them at the time they wrote.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

It has several times been noted that the beginning of the agitation for independence coincided with the date of the annexation of Canada. From that time the Disunion propaganda daily gained strength. The ministry, at length, recognizing the fact that the colonies were likely to drift away, devised measures intended to restrain them; but these measures, under the skilful policy of the Disunion chiefs, served only to accelerate the speed. For taking advantage of their novelty—which, however, was more seeming than real—these astute gentlemen set up a cry of tyranny and oppression, arousing the passions of the colonists, and thus gaining many adherents. Of course, as hinted by General Gage, if these measures had not been instituted other excuses would have been found, for no government ever existed in which there was no grievance.

Colonies are the spoiled children of empires. Like all spoiled children, they are apt to be selfish, to believe that their deserts are greater than those of their less fortunate brethren, residents of more crowded regions, where toil is harder, and greater exertions are needed to obtain subsistence, and to demand and expect commensurate rewards and privileges. Why should not “the colonies insist upon immunities which the people of Great Britain do not enjoy,” “if they have a right to them?”* asked Franklin in 1766. Again, he asserted that the colonists ought to be “considered as above the level of other subjects,” having acquired “additional merit” by the risk and expense of their settlement.† “If we enjoy and are entitled to more liberty than the British constitution allows, where is the harm?”‡ asked John Adams, a decade later.

Proud of their superior fortunes, and claiming superior virtues, the adherents of the Disunion chiefs were brought to believe that it was just that their tax-laden

*“Political Observations”: Franklin’s *Writings*, Vol. IV., p. 212.

†*Ibid.*, Vol. IV., p. 288.

‡“Novanglus”: John Adams’ *Works*, Vol. IV., pp. 116, 117.

LOYALTY AND PSEUDO-LOYALTY

fellow-subjects of Great Britain should bear the whole burden of Empire, and thought it no shame to be beholden to them for the expense of protecting their territory from foreign invasion and domestic conflict; contenting themselves with defraying the comparatively trifling cost of their civil governments. Though the colonists had never furnished a single soldier for the defense of the mother country, nor contributed one farthing for that purpose, they demanded and received her protection for themselves. It is true, they contributed some men and money to be employed in the Spanish and French wars—wars begun and carried on largely in their interests—but, except in a single unimportant instance,⁷ those men and that money were used upon their own territory, and for their own protection and aggrandizement. The money, too, was sparingly and grudgingly given, and with no regard to due proportion between the several provinces, so that much bickering and dissatisfaction resulted. And when the need for British protection no longer existed, the proposal that they should contribute a trifling amount towards the expenses of the Empire was opposed with inveterate determination. “When they want the protection of the kingdom they are always very ready to ask for it,” said George Grenville, in a speech to the Parliament. “That protection has always been afforded them in the most full and ample manner. The nation has run itself into an immense debt to give them that protection; and now they are called upon to contribute a small share towards the public expense, an expense arising from themselves, they renounce your authority.”*

Furthermore, the money supplied by the colonists was expended in their own territory, together with large sums taken from the pockets of the British tax-payers, to the great financial gain of the colonists. In fact, they were paid by the tax-payers of Great Britain for helping to fight their own battles and advance their own inter-

*Speech of George Grenville in reply to Chatham in the debate on the repeal of the Stamp Act.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

ests, while many of them were giving aid and comfort to the enemies of the Empire by supplying them with provisions at great profit to themselves.* By these nefarious dealings fortunes were made by many unscrupulous merchants and shipowners, at the expense of the people of Great Britain and the lives of her soldiers. It was an attempt to suppress this illicit and treasonable traffic that gave to the Disunion leaders their first opportunity to agitate against the Home Government, for this attempt took the form of the writs of assistance, the issue of which was used as an excuse to kindle the flame of insurrection in Massachusetts.

Chatham complained of the practice, but he seemed at least as much concerned for the interests of his beloved navigation acts as he was in preserving the loyalty of the colonists. It was done, he declared, "in open contempt of the authority of the mother country, as well as to the manifest prejudice of the manufactures and trade of Great Britain."†

*See Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, Vol. III., p. 330; also Hildreth's *History of the United States*, Vol. II., p. 498.

†William Pitt to the Colonial Governors: Thackeray's *Life of Chatham*, Vol. II., p. 475; Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, Vol. III., p. 330; Hildreth's *History of the United States*, Vol. II., p. 498; Arnold's *History of Rhode Island*, Vol. II., pp. 227, 235, 236.

CHAPTER IX.

THE ROYAL SCAPEGOAT.

THAT for years, with dogged perseverance and determination he egged on his ministers to measures subversive of the liberties of the colonists, and, by these means, having compelled them to take up arms to preserve these liberties, he refused to sanction measures of conciliation that would have brought them back to the arms of the motherland; that with equal persistency and determination he insisted upon the prolongation of hostilities with the insurgent colonists, after all hope of subduing them had departed,¹—this is the sum of the charges brought against George the Third in the matter of the American Revolution by writers on both sides of the Atlantic.

So often and so confidently have these charges been repeated, and so universally has his condemnation thereon been affirmed, that it has become an article of political heresy to deny their truth. Nevertheless, they seem to me to be essentially false in every particular. I can find no instance in which King George urged upon his ministers measures relating to the colonies that were unconstitutional or unjust to the colonists. With the measures of the Grenville ministry—that so often have been declared to have been the “cause” of the Revolution—he had little or nothing to do. The stamp tax was not of his devising; he was not consulted about it, and did not even sign the act. Upon learning of the agitation against it, he declared that he was willing that it should be repealed if it could not be amended so as to give satisfaction.² Neither did he devise the Townshend acts, but was opposed to their repeal at the dic-

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

tation of a mob. It is true, too, that he favored the Boston Port Bill and the accompanying coercion acts, but these were punitive measures aimed against a faction in open insurrection, and, therefore, constitutional.

It is quite as untrue that the King opposed conciliatory measures, for he favored both of the attempts at conciliation made by the North ministry. That to which he was most opposed was the eternal vacillation of the ministry, that weakness that prompted them to revoke their measures at the first sign of opposition from the colonists, and then to propose others which were sure to provoke as much opposition as did those that they had revoked. It is said that it was the determination of the King to be his own minister that was productive of all the mischief; but it seems to me that had the King actually been his own minister, the measures taken in the matter of the colonies, at least, would have been consistent. Had Chatham been king, and the King minister, though it cannot be affirmed that there would have been no rebellion in the colonies, it may reasonably be affirmed that no rebellion there would have been successful.

But if the King did oppose any conciliatory measures that would have been acceptable to the chiefs of the dominant party in the colonies, he did not thereby do anything to cause the loss of the colonies to the Empire, for it is certain that no measures of conciliation that would have kept the colonies in the Empire would have been accepted by them. As to the charge that the King prolonged the war long after all hope of subduing the rebellion had passed, we have only to call as witnesses Washington, Hamilton and other Revolutionary chiefs triumphantly to acquit him of that charge.

But the most serious count in the indictment against King George remains. It is alleged that he attempted to force upon his subjects on both sides of the Atlantic arbitrary and despotic rule; that he built up for himself greater personal power than had been possessed by any king of Great Britain since the deposition of James

THE ROYAL SCAPEGOAT

the Second, to the imminent danger of the free institutions of the whole empire. But if this were his object, surely he went about it in a remarkable manner. One would think that this lover of arbitrary power, this would-be despot, would have attempted to undermine the influence of the representatives of the people who stood between him and his subjects. Strange to say, it was to uphold the power of Parliament that all his efforts were directed; and this is what was so strenuously objected to by the American Disunion chiefs. According to their theory it was the prerogative of the King that assured to them their liberties.³ It follows, therefore, that the ground of their condemnation of the King was not that he had attempted to override the constitution, but that he did not override the constitution by taking power into his own hands which by long usage had become exclusively to belong to Parliament.

Strange, indeed, was the spectacle! A king of England, an offspring of the Stuarts, contending for the rights of Parliament, and the transatlantic progeny of the Puritans acclaiming kingly prerogative! "Good heavens!" exclaimed Dean Tucker, aghast at such a situation, "what a sudden alteration is this! An American pleading for an extension of the prerogative of the Crown!" But the dean was not deceived as to the true meaning of this phenomenon, for he added: "Yes, if it could make for his cause, and for extending it, too, beyond the bounds of reason and common sense."*

Franklin, to whom in particular the dean's words were addressed, seems to have been somewhat at a loss for an answer, or for any but a lame one. "What stuff!" he replied; "why may not an American plead for the just prerogative of the Crown? And is it not a just prerogative of the Crown to give the subjects leave to settle in a foreign country?"† That is to say, it was proper for a constitutional king to give his sub-

*Dean Tucker, in *Good Humour*.

†"Political Observations": Franklin's *Writings*, Vol. IV., p.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

jects leave to set up a different form of government than that which the constitution by which he was bound prescribed; not in "a foreign country," as Franklin insidiously suggested, but within the Empire itself. The irrelevance of the answer equals its audacity and falsity, for it shifts the question.

That King George was possessed of a determination—a doggedness, if the word be preferred—that caused him to persist in any course that he conceived to be the right one is not to be denied; but that that characteristic caused the loss of the colonies, or contributed towards that loss, there is no proof or even plausible inference. In this King George has been made the scapegoat for the sins of his ministers. One thing that the determination of the King did was to break up the power of the Whig oligarchy that had ruled England for half a century, and had instituted and maintained a system of political corruption such as never before or since has been maintained there. Also it transformed a dissipated court into the most orderly and moral of all the courts in Europe.

That the courage of the King equalled his determination is shown by the fact that at the time the capital of the country was in the power of a mob, when the smoke of incendiary fires was rising from its public buildings and places of worship; at a time when, as said Dr. Johnson, "the magistrates dared not call the guards for fear of being hanged;" when "the guards would not come for fear of being given up to the blind rage of popular juries;"* at that time the King came to the rescue of his terrorized subjects, declaring that at least one magistrate would do his duty, and by force of his personal will caused action to be taken that restored order to the distracted city.† Had his cousin of France shown half his determination his head would have remained upon his shoulders, his country would have

*Croker's *Boswell*, p. 509.

†Campbell's *Lives of the Chancellors*, Vol. VIII., pp. 41, 43.

THE ROYAL SCAPEGOAT

been spared the horrors of the Reign of Terror, and been happy under a free constitutional government, while the nations of Europe would have escaped a generation of rapine and slaughter.

If ever an impartial biography of George the Third be written, it will be seen that Britain owes not a little to this much berated monarch.



CHAPTER X.

THE RIGHTS OF PROPERTY AND OF MAN.

THE government of the United States was not "conceived in liberty." On the contrary, it was conceived in the urgent necessity for a restraint of liberty. It is in the nature of things that those who have inaugurated and carried on a successful rebellion should be called upon to resist a new revolt against their rule. For to acquire a following among the ignorant and unthinking, upon whose assistance their success is dependent, they must make to them pledges impossible of redemption under any form of government worthy of the name.

So it was with the triumphant Disunionists. As soon as the colonies had been freed from Imperial control, in a contest begun for the avowed purpose of getting rid of taxation, the lower orders of the colonists, who had taken seriously such promises as that of "a universal and perpetual exemption from taxes," which, John Adams informs us, on one occasion "was held up to some of them as a temptation by underhand politicians," began to demand the fulfilment of such promises. Disappointed in this, they determined to take the remedy into their own hands. The Disunion chiefs had taught them that governments might be overthrown, and they had taken the lesson to heart.

Every State was seething with disaffection, and their governments were imperilled. In one which had been the foremost to resist Imperial taxation were found a number who objected equally to taxation by their own State. They rose in formidable insurrection, and brought into the field against their new government

THE RIGHTS OF PROPERTY AND OF MAN

armed forces consisting of about "twelve or fifteen thousand desperate and unprincipled men," gathered from several adjoining States, under a leader who had held a command in the Revolutionary army. They demanded a general division of property and the abolition of all debts, declaring that anyone opposed to them was "an enemy to equity and justice, and ought to be swept from the face of the earth."^a Sharp f.

The prospect was alarming. "The flames of internal insurrection were ready to burst out in every quarter; we walked on ashes concealing fire beneath our feet,"* said a statesman of Pennsylvania. "Nothing was wanting to bring about a revolution but a great man to head the insurgents." It "brought the republic to the brink of destruction,"† said two of his colleagues of an adjoining State.

Washington deplored this "melancholy proof" that "mankind, when left to themselves, are unfit for their own government." "It was but the other day," he complained, "that we were shedding our blood to obtain the constitutions under which we now live, constitutions of our own choice and making, and now we are unsheathing the sword to overthrow them." "Something must be done," he declared, "or the fabric must fall, for it is certainly tottering." "Let us have a government by which our lives, liberties and properties will be secured, or let us know the worst at once," he pleaded. "Without an alteration in our political creed," he urged, "the superstructure we have been seven years in raising, at the expense of so much treasure and blood, must fall. We are, in fact, verging to anarchy and confusion," to some "awful crisis."‡

These forebodings were echoed by men of lesser note.

*Elliott's *Debates*, Vol. II., p. 521.

†*Ibid.*, Vol. III., pp. 180, 274.

‡Washington to Henry Lee, October 31, 1786; to James Madison, November 5, 1786; to David Humphreys, December 26, 1786; to Henry Knox, February 26, 1787: *Writings*, Vol. IX., pp. 203, 204, 207, 221, 234.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

"Very few among us now deny that a federal government is necessary to save us from ruin. . . . Anarchy and uncertainty attend our future state," said Mr. Ames, in the Massachusetts Convention. "That a general system of government is indispensably necessary to save our country from ruin is agreed upon all sides," said John Hancock, in the same body. "We must unite in order to preserve peace among ourselves. If we be divided, what is to prevent wars from breaking out among the States?" asked Oliver Ellsworth in that of Connecticut. In the New York Convention Robert Livingston asserted that the "distress" of the people pointed out the necessity of a Union. In that of Virginia Governor Randolph declaimed: "The tempest growls over you; look round; wheresoever you look you see danger. . . . Justice strangled and trampled under foot." He likened the United States to a "shipwrecked vessel." In the Federal Convention Pinckney deplored the "rapid approaches towards anarchy." And Mr. Gerry feared "a civil war."*

There must, then, be instituted some kind of a government. The government demanded by Washington was an "energetic government,"† and so thought the other chiefs of the Revolution. Under the stress of necessity, the "unreasonable jealousy" existing between the states, which had led them to the verge of civil war, was laid in abeyance, and some appearance of harmony prevailed among them. Delegates from nearly all the States met in convention to frame a federal constitution that should bind the whole and place the governing power in the hands of the well-to-do classes.

The government so formed was not formed "of the people," for a large number of the people were excluded from any share in it. It was not formed "by the people," for they who formed it did not represent the people, having the suffrages of but a part of them. It

*Elliott's *Debates*, Vol. II., pp. 156, 158, 175, 186, 210; Vol. III., pp. 66, 114; Vol. V., pp. 444, 557.

†Washington to Knox, February 3, 1787: Washington's *Writings*, Vol. IX., p. 230.

THE RIGHTS OF PROPERTY AND OF MAN

was not formed "for the people," for those who formed it took excessive care that the interests of the people should be subservient to those of the landed and moneyed classes. It is necessary only to read the debates of the federal and state conventions to realize that the objects of the constitution-makers was not to give freedom and power to the people, but to restrict their power and place it in the hands of a moneyed aristocracy—in other words, to form a limited plutocracy.

In these debates we hear no more of natural law and the consent of the governed.³ Throughout them all was echoed the demand of Washington for an energetic government. Mr. Madison was for "a strong, energetic government." Mr. Baldwin declared it "ought to be energetic and formidable." Mr. Turner felt "the want of an energetic government." Mr. Monroe, also, was greatly attached to "an energetic government;" and Mr. Stillman declared that "the establishment of a firm, energetic government" was "the most fervent prayer of his soul." Gouverneur Morris avowed himself "the advocate of a strong government. . . . A firm government alone can protect our liberties." Robert Morris was "happy to perceive that it is a principle on all sides conceded and adopted by this committee, that an energetic federal government is essential to the preservation of our Union." So to Mr. Jay it seemed "on all sides agreed that a strong, energetic federal government is necessary for the United States." Hamilton, of course, was for "public strength and individual security." Mr. West even intimated that "*the people*" were "running mad after an energetic government."*

Now, what did these constitution-makers mean by an energetic government? Not, certainly, a government *of, by or for* the people; but, plainly, a government removed so far as they dared to remove it *from* the people.

"The views of the governed," declared Hamilton,

*Elliott's *Debates*, Vol. I., pp. 421, 462, 465, 476; Vol. II., pp. 31, 33, 164, 282, 296; Vol. III., p. 217; Vol. V., p. 272.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

"are often materially different from those who govern. . . . Give power to the many and they will oppress the few." Mr. Randolph asserted that "no government can be stable which hangs on human inclination alone, unbiased by coercion." The evils under which the United States labored, he declared, were to be found "in the turbulence and follies of democracy; that some check, therefore, was to be sought for against this tendency of our governments." Mr. Gerry, too, asserted that "Demagogues are the great pests of our government and have occasioned most of our distresses." "Democracy," he declared, was "the worst of all political evils. . . . The evils we experience flow from an excess of democracy. The people do not want virtue, but are dupes of pretended patriots. . . . He had been taught by experience the danger of the levelling spirit." Mr. Ames likened a democracy to "a volcano which conceals the fiery materials of its own destruction." Mr. Madison declared that in all civilized countries there were different classes of people, the poor and the rich, "those who labor under the hardships of life," and "those who are placed above the feelings of indigence." And he asked how the danger of the power sliding into the hands of the former could be "guarded against." Mr. Corbin, like Governor Randolph, declared that "coercion is necessary in every government. Justice, Sir, cannot be done without it."*

So the people must be coerced. But how? Under what manner of government?

Mr. Hamilton "had no scruple in declaring, supported as he was by the opinion of so many of the wise and good, that the British Government was the best in the world, and that he doubted much whether anything short of it would do in America." He was, he said, almost led "to despair that a republican government could be established," yet "he was sensible, at the same time, that it would be unwise to propose one of any other

**Elliott's Debates*, Vol. I., pp. 421, 451, 483; Vol. II., p. 10; Vol. III., p. 106; Vol. V., pp. 136, 138, 203, 242, 243, 557.

THE RIGHTS OF PROPERTY AND OF MAN

form." Mr. Gerry also thought that "perhaps a limited monarchy would be the best government, if we could organize it by creating a house of peers." But he, like Hamilton, was sensible that "it cannot be done." Many other delegates to the several conventions, including Patrick Henry, also lauded the British Government, and seemed sorry that one similar could not be organized in the United States.*

Having, as said Mr. Randolph, "made a bold stroke for monarchy," the members of the Federal Convention began "doing the same for an aristocracy." Several of them had expressed a preference for an aristocratic form of government, as being the best next to the monarchical form, Gouverneur Morris, in particular, declaring that "his creed was that there never was, or ever will be, a civilized society without an aristocracy." In order to preserve the aristocratic feature, many days were consumed in the Convention in the endeavor to devise a practicable method by which the chief executive and the members of the upper house might be saved from the degradation of being elected by the people; though, in the matter of the constitution of the executive, Gouverneur Morris differed from his colleagues, advocating that officer being elected "by the freeholders of the country," rather than by the legislatures, as the freeholders would "never fail to prefer some man of distinguished character." To be rid of this alternative, several plans were suggested for the selection of the president, among them that of a legislative lottery. "It seems to be admitted," said Mr. Hamilton, "that no good one could be established on republican principles;" therefore, he was in favor of an hereditary executive. But if this could not be, at least let him "be for life." And "let one branch of the legislature hold their places for life, or at least during good behavior." This branch was to be composed of "the rich and the well-born," who thus would have "a distinct, permanent share in

*Elliott's *Debates*, Vol. I., p. 408; Vol. III., pp. 51, 53, 59, 64; Vol. V., p. 202.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

the government." Mr. Dickinson, too, "wished the Senate to consist of the most distinguished characters, distinguished for their rank in life and their weight of property, and bearing as strong a likeness to the British House of Lords as possible." Mr. Randolph thought that "the democratic licentiousness of the State legislatures proved the necessity of a firm Senate." Gouverneur Morris said that if the Senate were to be dependent, "we are better without it. To make it independent it should be for life. . . . Such an aristocratic body will keep down the turbulence of democracy." Mr. Reed, too, thought that the Senators "ought to continue in office during good behavior."*

Alexander Hamilton, who when enlisted in the Disunion ranks to oppose the British Government had lauded the law of nature, and had declared that "the sacred rights of mankind are not to be rummaged for among old parchments or musty records," but were "written as with a sunbeam in the whole volume of human nature," now himself produced a parchment which, if not old or musty, was as well devised for the purpose of abridging the "sacred rights of mankind" as any. Certainly its provisions, if carried out, would have abridged them to a greater extent than did those of the British Government that had received Mr. Hamilton's condemnation. This was a plan for a federal government, which, as said Dr. Johnson, a member of the Federal Convention, was "praised by everybody" and "supported by none." It provided for an assembly, elected by the people, to serve three years; a senate, elected by a board of electors, to serve for life; a chief executive, to be appointed by electors, to serve for life, with an unlimited power to veto acts of the legislature, and the power of appointing officers; and a judiciary, appointed by the executive, to serve for life.†

*Elliott's *Debates*, Vol. I., pp. 422, 475, 488; Vol. V., pp. 166, 186, 203, 271, 283, 322, 360, 514.

†*Ibid.*, Vol. I., pp. 179, 421, 422, 423, 431; Vol. V., pp. 584, 590.

THE RIGHTS OF PROPERTY AND OF MAN

Praise it though they might, the members of the Convention did not dare to adopt this plan, which, in fact, provided for the establishment of a monarchy patterned on the very bad model of Poland.

Monarchical the new government could not be; aristocratic it was, so far as it was safe to make it by removing the appointment of the chief executive, the judiciary and the senators from the direct control of the people. Baldly plutocratic it would have been had the wishes of the constitution-makers been carried out. Differing in other respects, they were all enthusiastic in praise of wealth and in proclaiming its right to rule.

"Money is strength," said Mr. Butler, "and every State ought to have its weight in the national council in proportion to the quantity it possesses;" and Franklin observed that "the representation ought to be in proportion to the importance of numbers and wealth in each State." "The landed interest," said Mr. Pinckney, "is the governing power of America." But Mr. King "observed that there might be some danger in requiring landed property as a qualification [for office] since it might exclude the moneyed interest." "This inequality of property," said Mr. Hamilton, "constituted the great and fundamental distinction in society." Mr. Rutledge said that "property was certainly the principal object of society." Therefore, he "contended for the admission of wealth in the estimate by which representation should be estimated." Mr. Butler agreed with him, and, as became a slaveholder, insisted that as the black bondsmen of the South were also property, they, too, should be included in the estimate. "The landed interest at present is prevalent," said Mr. Madison; but he feared that "in process of time" it would be "overbalanced in future elections," and unless this were "wisely provided against, what," he asked, "will become of your government?" Therefore, "Landholders ought to have a share in the government, to support these valuable interests. . . . They ought to be so constituted as to protect the minority of the opulent against the

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

majority. The Senate, therefore, ought to be this body." Mr. Gerry thought that "if property be one object of government, provisions to secure it cannot be improper." Mr. Mason, too, suggested that the members of the Senate ought "to be qualified as to property;" and Gouverneur Morris declared that it "ought to be composed of men of great and established property. . . . The wealthy will ever exist, and you never can be safe unless you gratify them, as a body, in pursuit of honor and profit. . . . The influence of the rich must be regarded. . . . Property was the main object of society. . . . If property, then, was the main object of government, certainly it ought to be the one measure of the influence due to those who were to be affected by the government." Therefore, he wished to have the qualifications of electors so fixed as to "restrain the right of suffrage to freeholders. . . . Give the votes to people who have no property, and they will sell them to the rich." He was not, he declared, "duped by the association of the words 'taxation and representation.'" Colonel Mason was among those who thought that "one important object in constituting the Senate was to secure the rights of property. . . . He suggested, therefore, the propriety of annexing to the office a qualification of property." General Thompson thought that the representatives, as well as the senators, should have "some qualifications of property; for," said he, "when men have nothing to lose they have nothing to fear." Mr. Pinckney "thought it essential that the members of the legislature, the executive and the judges should be possessed of competent property. . . . Were he to fix the quantum of property which should be required, he should not think of less than one hundred thousand dollars for the President, half that sum for each of the judges, and in like proportion for the members of the national legislature."⁴

*Elliott's *Debates*, Vol. I., pp. 404, 444, 452, 475, 476; Vol. II., p. 35; Vol. V., pp. 385, 386; 244, 247, 279, 296, 297, 371, 403, 405, 449, 450.

THE RIGHTS OF PROPERTY AND OF MAN

Other opinions of a like character were expressed by members of the Federal Constitutional Convention. These were the constitution-makers, without whose initiative and support that constitution would not have been made. Mr. Roosevelt tells us that "the statesmen who met in 1787 were earnestly patriotic. They unselfishly desired the welfare of their countrymen."^{*} Perhaps this is so; but if it be so, it is certain that they did not intend that that welfare should be derived from too much "self-government," or from the absence of "taxation without representation," principles the announcement of which had brought about the Revolution, and which alone had made it possible for them to frame any sort of government.

A full decade before the meeting of the Constitutional Convention—when the Disunion oligarchs had entire control of the governments of the several provinces or states, and the masses were without power or influence—the Disunion leaders, then engaged in conducting a war against the Home Government, ostensibly begun to save the people of the colonies from being governed without their consent, were careful to exclude them, so far as was possible, from participation in the new state governments they had set up. Thus John Adams, who had defined the word "freeman" as one "bound by no law to which he has not consented,"⁵ joined his colleagues in "enslaving" a large number of the inhabitants of his own province by excluding from the privilege of the suffrage such of them as did not possess "a freehold estate," or other equivalent property.⁶ "Very few men," he wrote, "who have no property have any judgment of their own;" and, therefore, he argued, "if you give to every man who has no property a vote, will you not make a fine encouraging provision for corruption?" In *theory*, he admitted, "the only moral foundation of government is the consent of the people." But then, my dear Sir, there is "wisdom and *policy*" to be considered.

**Gouverneur Morris*, pp. 134, 135.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

And then, again, you exclude women and minors. "Will not the same reason justify the state in fixing upon some certain quantity of property as a qualification?"*

Franklin, too, who had declared that they who have no vote "are absolutely enslaved to those who have votes," also favored the restriction of the privilege of suffrage to men of property.†

Such were the arguments used by the Disunion chiefs to justify their action in denying to their fellow-citizens the "rights" they had so vehemently claimed for them. So soon after—nay, the very while—they were claiming "self-government as the inherent right of all men, guaranteed both by constitutional and natural law, did they begin to talk of "giving" that right, as though they stood above all law, natural and civil. This was disingenuous, to say the least, but perhaps hypocrisy was included in the new forms of virtue which they so abundantly possessed.

One of the Revolutionary Fathers went even beyond his colleagues in denying to his countrymen the "rights" upon the withholding of which they had based their claim to the equity of rebellion. He proposed to govern all the territory outside of the original thirteen colonies as dependent provinces.‡ This gentleman before had manifested a similar disposition, for when, during the war for independence, the inhabitants of territory adjoining New York, fired by the example of their fellow-revolutionists, had claimed "self-government" as equally their right, he had given his voice for "conquering" them. "Success will sanctify every operation,"§ he declared.

Contrast these utterances of American lovers of liberty with the declaration of the Irishman, Henry Grattan, who declared that he "would be ashamed of

*John Adams to James Sullivan, May 26, 1776: *Works*, Vol. IX., pp. 375, 378, *passim*.

†Franklin's *Writings*, Vol. II., p. 372; Vol. IV., pp. 221, 224.

‡Gouverneur Morris: Speech in the Constitutional Convention: Elliott's *Debates*, Vol. V., p. 279.

THE RIGHTS OF PROPERTY AND OF MAN

giving freedom to but six hundred of his countrymen when he could extend it to two millions more.”* Mr. Roosevelt, I believe, has some Irish blood in his veins; perhaps he might afford to extend some admiration to this Irishman for so “unselfishly desiring the welfare of his countrymen.”

The other States followed the example of Massachusetts in requiring a property qualification as a requisite for the franchise; thus a majority of their citizens were denied the right to consent to the laws that governed them, and so were “enslaved.” Some of the States established religious tests, one, at least, forbidding the holding of offices by Jews.

**Speeches of Henry Grattan*, Vol. I., p. 132.

CHAPTER XI.

SELF-GOVERNMENT AND NATURAL LAW.

THE curious but very prevalent belief that new and untried principles of government were evolved and put in practice by the organizers of the Revolution, principles that gave to the people the right to "govern themselves," of course, is as erroneous as any other tenet of the cult of the Revolutionary Myth. To find, even in the history of England, the origin of these supposed new theories of government—leaving out of the question the very general promulgation of communal socialist theories during the fifteenth century—it is necessary to reach back nearly five centuries.

Long before the "Pilgrim Fathers" were moved by the Spirit to seek an asylum in the wilderness of the New World, the doctrine of the "consent of the governed" was preached in England; and its practice was attempted there, at the cost of some blood and treasure, and its failure recorded, before they were well settled in their huts on the banks of the Charles River.

In 1592 Richard Hooker wrote: "Sith men naturally have no full and perfect power to command whole politic multitudes of men, therefore, utterly without our consent, we could in such sort be at no man's commandment living."¹

These ideas took fast hold of the Puritan mind. A resolution of the Long Parliament declared that the people were the original of all just power. Milton asserted that, "No man who knows aught can be so stupid as to deny that all men were naturally born free;"

SELF-GOVERNMENT AND NATURAL LAW

and, further, that "authority and power" were "naturally in every one of them."

So much for the early theory. The early experiment was not very successful. The founders of the Commonwealth tried it, and produced anarchy. "The nation," urged Ludlow to Cromwell, "should be governed by its own consent." "Aye," replied Oliver, Protector, "but where shall we find that consent?" Government should be "for the good of the people," he declared, "and not what pleases them;" which suggests Carlyle's "First Right of Man"—"the everlasting privilege of the foolish to be governed by the wise."

Locke, following Hooker, preached the consent of the governed, and declared that "all men are naturally equal," thus anticipating by a century the Declaration of Rights promulgated by the French National Assembly. Half a century later Jean Jacques Burlamaqui and his fellow-townsman and contemporary, that other Jean Jacques, preached and amplified the same doctrine.

And, what may seem strange to some, not only philosophers, but kings, joined in asserting the natural freedom and equality of man. And what kings? The despots and tyrants of the historic page! Frederick the Great asserted that "Kings are but men, and all men are equal." And that tyrant of tyrants, the heartless uxoricide, Henry the Eighth, in a deed of manumission of two of his "villeins," declared that "God created all men free;" thus uttering one of the earliest recorded assertions of that paradox by an Englishman, and saying more than that other exponent of the people's rights, Thomas Jefferson, dared to say in his famous "Declaration."

Truly, proclaimers of the "Rights of Man" are found in unexpected places!

The Disunionists wrote and spoke volumes about "Natural Law." This was helpful to their cause, because, by asserting the supremacy of the law of nature, they were able to render nugatory any statutory law,

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

otherwise unassailable, that stood in the way of their claims. They had but to appeal to the provisions of "Natural Law," as interpreted by themselves, in order to erase such offending ordinance from the statute books.

By this "Natural Law," they did not mean—

"The good old rule, the simple plan,
That he may take who has the power,
And he may keep who can;"

(which, in fact, is the only natural law affecting the political relations of men), but something entirely different, an imaginary, but, to them, very convenient law, that ordained that they and their party should do and have whatever they desired to do and have, and that all who were not in accord with them should have no privilege at all.

But the Disunion chiefs were not the first to talk and write nonsense about natural law; even that distinction must be denied them. Philosophers, jurists and statesmen had done so before them. Hobbes, in his *Leviathan*, had written intelligibly about natural laws, and Grotius had maintained a distinction between natural and civil law; but Puffendorf, in his *De Jure Naturae et Gentium*, essayed to construct a universal law for the government of nations, from the promptings of human nature; and Burlamaqui, confusing natural law with reason and justice, set it up as a guide for civilized communities. The Disunion leaders, adopting these ideas, wrote and talked effusively of "nature," as if it were the half-way house for colonies on their road to independence. Hence, the apparently foolish, oft-quoted remark of Patrick Henry that he and his fellow-colonists were "in a state of nature."

Sir Edward Coke, the insulter of the gallant Sir Walter Raleigh, with other English judges, asserted that natural law was engrafted on the English Constitution. Among statesmen, Chatham and his brother Whigs cited the decrees of natural law to prove that the Opposition had violated the statutes of the realm;

SELF-GOVERNMENT AND NATURAL LAW

Lord Camden, the demagogue Chancellor, in particular, declaring that the union of taxation and representation was "an eternal law of nature."

But Whigs and revolutionists were not to have a monopoly of natural law. The advocates of the Divine Right of Kings were not behind those of the Rights of Man in invoking its judgments. The Duke of Brunswick, the Emperor of Germany and the King of Prussia, in a proclamation, called upon the Parisians to give to Louis XVI., then their captive, the submission and obedience due to sovereigns from their subjects, "*by the law of nature.*"

The Disunion leaders, then, despising parliamentary statutes, based their contentions upon the doctrines of the philosophers. Hooker, Hobbes, Harrington, Grotius, Spinoza, Puffendorf, Milton, Sydney, Locke, Lord Somers, Bolingbroke, Montesquieu, Vattel, Burlamaqui, Rousseau and Beccaria were eagerly read and frequently quoted. Of all these, Harrington, Locke and Grotius pleased them the most, and Rousseau not at all. Grotius pleased them well, because they thought they discovered in his writings a warrant for throwing off their allegiance to the Crown. They held that, according to his teaching, as *they* had closed the courts, dispersed the legislatures and set up mob rule, *the king* had abdicated. Harrington and Locke pleased them even better, for they spoke respectfully of property, while Rousseau desired to abolish all distinctions between the rich and the poor. "Property" was ever in their thoughts and on their tongues. So often does the word appear in the literature of the American revolution, that one is reminded of the hoof-beats of the horse of Tennyson's "Northern Farmer." "Property, property, property!" runs like a refrain through it all. Many visitors to the colonies and the newly enfranchised states have testified to the adulation of their inhabitants of wealth, among them Chastellux, who has recorded that the possession of money constituted the sole distinction among them.* John

*Chastellux's *Travels*, Vol. I., p. 278.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Adams, too, as might be expected, declared that the distinction conferred by wealth was proper to a republic.*

It is not true, then, as has been asserted by a distinguished American statesman, that the revolution was undertaken "on a strict question of principle."² Aside from the prime moving cause—a determination to acquire independence—*property*, not *principle*, furnished the incentive to rebellion. After independence was won, the Disunion leaders denied to those without whose help it could not have been attained the very "rights" for which they claimed to have been contending. As has been seen, they established a property qualification for the suffrage; they also organized admiralty courts ? modelled upon those of Great Britain, the existence of which had been cited as one of their grievances, thus establishing a system of taxation without representation and trial without jury,³ the two capital crimes with which the Home Government was charged, and the chief excuse for the overthrow of Imperial rule.

*John Adams' *Works*, Vol. IV., pp. 428, 429; Vol. V., p. 489; Vol. VI., pp. 9, 65, 89, 280; Vol. IX., p. 560.

CHAPTER XII.

DO THE ANGLO-BRITANNIC RACE AND THE REST OF THE WORLD OWE THEIR FREE INSTITUTIONS TO THE SUCCESS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION ?

It is asserted by eminent British writers that the revolting colonists, in fighting their own battles, were fighting as well the battles of the people of the mother country, and in winning them, won their freedom and their own.

One of these writers, who perhaps more than any other now living has adopted the opinions and prejudices of the English eighteenth century Whigs, assures us that but for the success of the American revolutionists in gaining their independence, the growth of the free institutions of Great Britain would have been checked, and the doctrine of non-resistance and passive obedience established in that country. At least, that seems to me to be his meaning.

"It is," he writes, "almost demonstrably certain that the vindication of the supremacy of popular interests over all other considerations would have been bootless toil, and that the great constitutional struggle from 1760 to 1783 would have ended otherwise than it did, but for the failure of the war against the insurgent colonies and the final establishment of American independence. It was this portentous transaction which finally routed the arbitrary and despotic pretensions of the House of Commons over the people, and which put an end to the hopes entertained by the sovereign of mak-

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

ing his personal will supreme in the Chambers. . . . The struggle which began unsuccessfully in Brentford in Middlesex was continued at Boston in Massachusetts. . . . The ruin of the American cause would have been also the ruin of the constitutional cause in England."*

Another distinguished Englishman intimates that had the colonial insurrection been suppressed the freedom of Englishmen, as well as of Americans, would have been overthrown and arbitrary government established in both countries.†

Another English writer, of much learning and some fame, tells us that the "growing patronage of the colonies, if they had remained a few years longer in our hands, must have given the ministers a power deadly to a free constitution."‡

Of course, such opinions are not new. They were put forth by English statesmen and writers at the time of the Revolution. All will remember the eloquent declaration of Chatham, that if America fell she "would embrace the pillars of the state and pull down the constitution along with her." And among the smaller men who expressed such opinions was Horace Walpole, who declared that "if England prevailed English and American liberty were at an end."

Among Americans of modern days, Mr. Roosevelt has said of the Revolutionists that "they warred victoriously for the right, in a struggle whose outcome vitally affected [favorably, I presume, is meant] the welfare of the whole human race."§ So, not the British and American people alone, but the peoples of the whole earth, owe a debt of gratitude to the American revolutionists, and to their English aiders and abettors.

If all this be true, then it must be acknowledged that the result was cheaply purchased, even at the heavy cost

*John Morley's *Burke*, p. 39.

†Buckle's *History of Civilization*, Vol. I., p. 48.

‡George Croly's *George IV*.

§Gouverneur Morris, p. 5.

FREE INSTITUTIONS AND THE REVOLUTION

of rebellion, war and carnage, with all their attendant evils and infamies. Though, even if convinced of its truth, we must still decry the acts of chicanery and bad faith on the part of the Disunion leaders; though we must still abhor the barbarous persecutions of their unoffending countrymen, incited by self-styled champions of freedom; though we must deplore the resulting maliciously fostered enmity which so long has kept asunder the two great branches of the Anglo-Britannic race—yet, if the constitutional freedom of that race could not have been maintained in any other way, we must rejoice that it was so purchased.

But is it true?

In examining Mr. Morley's statements we find an incongruity at the outset, one that seems to indicate that he is not very sure of his ground. He assumes that but for colonial independence there would have been established in England a sort of Venetian Council of Ten and a despotic monarchy. Surely such a combination is an impossible political *mélange*. Would not "the arbitrary and despotic pretensions of the House of Commons" have interfered with the realization of "the hopes entertained by the sovereign of making his personal will supreme?" If not, then there would have been established in Great Britain a form of government such as the world has never seen, and one beyond the capacity of man's intellect to comprehend. Its result, one may suppose, would have been like to that of the impact of a body moving with irresistible force upon an impervious and immovable object.

"The American cause," of course, was the intent of the Disunion chiefs to free the colonies from the control of Parliament. "The constitutional cause in England," presumably, was the attempt to wrest the political power from the hands of the privileged few, and place it in the hands of a larger proportion of the people. And we are to suppose that, if the colonists had not achieved their independence, the King, ministry, Commons or Lords—either or all together—would have

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

encroached more and more upon the privileges of the people, until they had made themselves irresponsible oligarchs or despots and the people their bondservants.

That before the establishment of colonial independence, the House of Commons, or the ministerial party in control of that House, made attempts to interfere, illegally and otherwise, with the freedom of Englishmen, is quite true. That that event, directly or indirectly, served to defeat or prevent those attempts is quite as untrue. They were, in fact, defeated, and the battle won for the people, before a shot was fired in the contest which brought about that independence.

The "General Warrants," by means of which the ministers sought to silence their radical assailants, were declared illegal and void by the English courts, and the ministers who used them mulcted in heavy damages, before the American Disunion agitators had fairly warmed to their work. An officer of the House of Commons, detailed to arrest one who had invaded its privileges, was taken into custody by the civic authorities, his prisoner released and himself imprisoned, before the dutiable tea had darkened the waters of Boston harbor; and one of the members of the House—a profligate demagogue,* but a man of brilliant attainments, and representing the rights of the people—after a contest of some seven or eight years, during which he had been thrice expelled and outlawed, was triumphantly restored to his seat before the Boston Port Bill had become a law.

Thus, "the arbitrary and despotic pretensions of the House of Commons," so far as they existed, were "finally routed," not by the consummation of American independence in 1783, but by the political triumphs of Englishmen ten years earlier. Before that time the House of Commons had rescinded and disavowed all its unconstitutional pretensions, and some that were not unconstitutional. It had condemned its own act by a

*John Wilkes, who, like all demagogues, cared for the interests of none but the faction around him.

FREE INSTITUTIONS AND THE REVOLUTION

resolution declaring general warrants illegal. It had submitted its authority to the supervision of the courts. It had yielded to the popular demand for the publication of its debates. And the most dangerous of all its "pretensions"—dangerous, not alone to the privileges of the people, but threatening the very frame of the constitution—its claim, virtually, to the power of legislation by resolution, had been laid away never again to be brought to light. "The two tides of power and popularity" had met, and the former was overwhelmed by the latter. And during the contest that brought about this result, the constitutional rights of the people had been ardently asserted, not alone by Lord Chatham, the most eloquent pleader for the rights of the revolting colonists, but by George Grenville, the designer of "that enormous engine fabricated for battering down all the rights and liberties of America,"* the Stamp Act, and the would-be "enslaver" of the colonists.

That one conversant with these facts should assert, or believe, that Englishmen of that era were incapable of preserving or extending their free institutions, and were fain to beg a new Magna Charta of their liberties from American statesmen on the Delaware, is strange, indeed. Chatham, at one time, at least—however at others he might have thought it politic to express contrary opinions—did not believe this. "The British public," he said, addressing his fellow peers, "demand redress, and, depend upon it, my lords, in one way or another they will have redress. They will never return to a state of tranquillity till they are redressed."† And they did not.

The determination of the people of England that their privileges should not be infringed by their representatives was not the sole guarantee for the prevention of the assumption of unconstitutional powers by the House of Commons, for that branch of the legislature could not assume undue powers without infringing upon those

*John Adams' *Works*, Vol. II., p. 154.

†Speech of Chatham, in January, 1770, reported by Francis.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

of the other branch. In this fact, also, lay a strong guarantee for the preservation of free institutions. Inevitably it must have happened that the continued exercise of undue powers by the one House would have been effectually checked by the other. Scarcely can one imagine the successful usurpation of arbitrary powers by the Commons, even though supported by the King, when opposed on the one side by the people and on the other by the Lords. When, at a later period, powers then declared to be arbitrary and unconstitutional were exercised by the ministry of the younger Pitt, they were exercised with the concurrence of both Houses of Parliament and the sovereign, and with the approval of the more conservative of the people, and they ended with the conditions from which they originated.

That King George hoped to make his personal will supreme we have the opinions of Mr. Morley and those of his way of thinking, alone, to prove. The King himself declared that he was "fighting the battle of the legislature,"* and those who read his correspondence with Lord North will see no reason to doubt his word. The fact is that, during the entire period of the agitation and war for American independence, in his intercourse with his ministers he assumed no powers that an English sovereign might not assume to-day without overstepping the boundary line of his constitutional prerogative. Edward the Seventh may *advise* with his minister; George the Third did no more. If the advice tended to the subversion of British free institutions, then if the minister acted upon it it was he who violated the constitution, not the King.

It is said that King George kept Lord North at the helm to do his personal bidding, even against his own desire. Lord North was retained in office, not by the will of the King alone, but because he could command a majority in the Commons. For the same reason a minister would be retained as long to-day. It is a sig-

*Said by the King to Lord North before the session of Parliament in October, 1775.

FREE INSTITUTIONS AND THE REVOLUTION

nificant fact, and one that of itself sufficiently refutes the claim of Mr. Morley and his friends, that it was American independence that caused the abandonment by King George of unconstitutional powers, that the only instance of the exercise of such powers by him occurred *after* that independence was attained. Then, indeed, he committed an act which might almost have justified Mr. Morley in his assertion that he sought to make his personal will supreme in the Chambers. In December, 1783, the King ventured to dismiss a ministry that were supported by a large majority in the Commons, and thereafter refused to dissolve Parliament that the people might have an opportunity to pass upon his act. Furthermore, he refused to dismiss his newly appointed ministers upon the demand of the House embodied in a resolution and an address, so that for four months there was seen the strange spectacle of a minister governing without a majority.

For these acts he was compared to Charles the First by the friends of those whom he had deprived of power.* It was declared that his action had filled the people with alarm and astonishment; but, in fact, the ousted ministers were as much detested by the people as by the King, even the demagogue, Wilkes, denouncing them and their supporters, numerous as they were, as a "faction."¹

These incidents are passed over by Mr. Morley and other writers, because, not only do they fail to support their contentions, but tend to refute them. But, suppose that, during the American Revolutionary propaganda, the King had dismissed ministers supported by a majority in the Commons who were disposed to grant the demands of the revolting colonists, and had installed in their stead others who refused to do so, *then*, indeed, we should have seen Mr. Morley and those of his way of thinking denounce the act as more tyrannical than any committed by the most tyrannical of the Stuarts.

*Fitzgerald's *Correspondence of Fox*, Vol. II., p. 220.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

When these gentlemen assert that the majority in the Commons that supported Lord North's administration were the creatures of the Crown and a few great or wealthy families, they assert the truth. But when they further assert, as does Mr. Buckle, that the success of the revolting colonists enabled the people of Great Britain to bring about a reform of these conditions; that it furnished the healthful pressure needed for that result, which would have been wanting without it, they are again speaking without warrant of fact.

For the half-century preceding the accession of George the Third, during which period the Whig oligarchy had gathered and kept in their hands all political power, the last thing they desired was parliamentary reform, for it would have rendered their power precarious, if it had not destroyed it. During that period they had become so used to corrupt methods of government that, even after being ousted from control, they scarcely could contemplate a reform. Burke would have retained the "rotten boroughs," and looked with dismay upon the prospect of an extension of the suffrage; rather, he would have reduced it. "Parliament," he is said to have declared, "was, and always had been, precisely what it ought to be."* Chatham, it is true, intimated that there was some necessity for amputating those decayed limbs from the body-politic, but he showed no disposition to act as surgeon. They were, he said, "natural infirmities," that should be borne with patience, for "amputation might be death." At another time he declared that reform must come before the end of the century, but in that generation "gentler remedies" must suffice.† Accordingly, not for one, but for two generations, the cornfields of Old Sarum continued to produce their periodical harvest of legislators, as in the days of Walpole and Newcastle; the great philanthropist and reformer, Wilberforce, was obliged to purchase his seat

**Memorials of Fox*, Vol. I., p. 322.

†*Speeches of Lord Chatham*, "On the State of the Nation."

FREE INSTITUTIONS AND THE REVOLUTION

in Parliament for eight thousand pounds, and the younger Pitt, like his august father, owed his introduction to Parliament to a "rotten borough."

For reform did not come before the end of the century, as predicted by Chatham; the new century was far advanced, and his illustrious son had begun and ended his brilliant career a quarter of a century, before the theories of reform became facts. And why was reform then established? Because of the consummation of American independence? How ridiculous! Rather ask why it was so long delayed, and the answer is pat to the purpose.

British parliamentary reform was delayed so long because of the distrust of the people consequent upon disturbances during the contest for American independence, as well as during the revolution in France, which itself was a consequence of that in America.

The effort made in 1780 by the Duke of Richmond to inaugurate manhood suffrage was doomed to inevitable failure, even if those upon whom he proposed to bestow the franchise had not at the time been threatening to break down the doors of the legislative halls within which the question was being considered. Five years later a half-hearted attempt at parliamentary reform was made by the younger Pitt, and met with no better fate. The first serious attempt at reform, which had it been supported by the Government surely would have succeeded, was made in 1792, when a motion to that effect was made and seconded by Charles Grey and Thomas Erskine. Why was the Government support then withheld? Because, said Mr. Pitt, that was "not a time to make hazardous experiments."* And why would parliamentary reform have been a hazardous experiment? Because of manifestations of unrest among the people, aroused by revolutionary publications and harangues by "The Friends of the People," lately the "Friends of America," who were eulogizing the French

**Parliamentary History*, Vol. XXIX.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

revolutionists and exhorting their countrymen to follow in their steps, in the same manner in which they had eulogized and supported the American revolutionists. "Can we forget what lessons have been given to the world within a few years?" asked the son of the great Chatham, the staunchest of those "friends," referring to these utterances. The objection was insurmountable, and parliamentary reform lay dormant for forty years, stunned into apathy by demonstrations the direct result of the success of the American Disunion propaganda and American independence. "That indiscriminate dread of all change which the French Revolution had produced," noticed by an eminent British historian, retarded reform for seventeen years after the French monarchy was restored. But that dread was not produced by circumstances arising from the French Revolution alone, but also from those dating back to the former one.

What is there in these facts to support the assertion that parliamentary reform was due to American independence? How much greater reason do they afford for the belief that but for that "portentous transaction" reform would have come a generation earlier, as predicted by Lord Chatham?

But Dr. Croly tells us that but for American independence the growing patronage of the colonies would have enabled the ministers to destroy the free institutions of Great Britain! The fact is there was no "growing patronage;" the colonists took good care that there should be none. How were the ministers to procure means from the colonies with which to secure such "deadly power"? As the expenses of the colonies were always greater than the revenues derived therefrom, they scarcely could have used the balance to "enslave" their fellow-subjects in England, even had they so desired. That they did not so desire or contemplate is shown by their acts, for they offered to the colonists a sufficient guarantee that their fiscal affairs should be

FREE INSTITUTIONS AND THE REVOLUTION

so arranged as to put them beyond the control of the ministers. And surely the reverend gentleman did not suppose that by means of the salaries of a few governors, judges and tide-waiters they would have been able to carry on the government of the Empire without recourse to Parliament, after the fashion of Charles the First with his ship-money!

It has been asserted that the success of the American Revolution forced the governing powers of Great Britain to be less despotic. That, for the same reason, the privileges of the upper classes were reduced, and those of the lower classes correspondingly increased. That these lower classes became more independent, less subservient to their social superiors, and less inclined to adulation of wealth and high birth.

I can find no evidence of this.

By far the most arbitrary and unconstitutional acts committed by king or ministry since the accession of the House of Brunswick were committed *after* American independence was attained.

In 1784 the younger Pitt clung to office for several months, at the head of a ministry that had been fourteen times defeated by the votes of the Opposition, the King declaring himself ready to take any steps to support him in this unconstitutional proceeding. The Whigs were furious, but their fury availed them nothing.

This high-handed beginning showed of what stuff the young premier was made, and his subsequent acts confirmed the prognostic. When, on the eve of the French Revolution, the preachings of the English advocates of reform by insurrection—the late “friends of America” and their successors—became dangerous to orderly government, he did not hesitate to resort to harsher and more arbitrary restraints than had been exercised in England since the expulsion of the last Stuart. “He was so alarmed at the danger of anarchy,” writes Mr. Lecky, “that, for some years, he maintained what was little less than a reign of terror in England, directed

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

against all who ventured to advocate any sort of democratic reform, or to maintain any independent political organization in the country.”*

In these measures Mr. Pitt was supported by the well-to-do and conservative classes, who had an uneasy remembrance of the disorders existing during the revolution in America, and who feared the example of the new revolution in France. There resulted prosecutions of “seditious and traitorous societies,” not one whit more seditious or traitorous than were their prototypes that, during the American War, flaunted with impunity their sedition and treason in the face of the Government; and of the “disaffected,” in the list of which all who advocated reform of any kind were included. But the most radical of these seditious societies or disaffected persons would not have dared openly to proclaim their advocacy of the cause of the enemies of their country to the extent that was done by those of their way of thinking at the time of the American Revolution. Treason had grown unpopular, and the great Whig chiefs no longer, as during that period, applauded those who uttered it. Burke in that “day of no judgment,” as he was pleased to style the early period of the French Revolution, went so far as to stigmatize his quondam associates and fellow “friends of America,” Drs. Price and Priestley, as “meddlers” and enemies to good government, for utterances no more extravagant than those disseminated by them in the earlier days, when he shared their opinions.

The “strong” government inaugurated by the younger Pitt outlasted his life and the French War, so that, three years after Waterloo, Jeremy Bentham, with some show of truth, could say that “despotism was advancing in seven-leagued boots.” In those days the governing powers troubled themselves little about the “Rights of Man.” In 1780 the magistracy had so great a respect for the constitutional rights of the rabble that they stood

**History of England*, Vol. V., p. 64.

FREE INSTITUTIONS AND THE REVOLUTION

by and witnessed the partial destruction of the capital of the three kingdoms rather than violate them by using the military to restrain their devastating ardor. Forty years later no such scruples troubled them, and the slaughter of peaceable townsmen, assembled for no unlawful purpose in St. Peter's Fields, by a body of cavalry, caused the "Battle of Peterloo" to be associated in the minds of the people with the bloody conflict on the Belgian plains.

So much had American independence done to advance the great constitutional struggle and to rout the arbitrary and despotic pretensions of the Government.

Of the social advance of the lower orders of Englishmen, and the increase among them of the spirit of independence, claimed to have been brought about by the establishment of the American republic, no evidence can be found except in the imagination of British Whig writers.

No one who reads the records of the periods should doubt that during the two decades following the battle of Waterloo the prestige of the peerage and gentry of England was far greater among the middle and lower classes than it was, say, during the two decades that preceded and followed the Peace of Paris, and that, during the later period, the independence and influence of the last-named classes had been lowered in proportion.

The English laborer, who, when reproved for shouldering the Emperor of Russia, replied, "We are all czars here,"* in 1815 had disappeared and left no successors. The independent "whitesmith," with "his saws under his arm," seen by the Irish clergyman in the days of the American Revolution, strolling into the coffee-house and calling for his glass of punch and the paper, "with as much ease as a lord,"² after the close of the Napoleonic wars was no longer in evidence, and his successors restricted their visits to places of resort frequented alone by those of their own order. The "whist-

*Anecdote preserved and repeated by Franklin in his diary.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

ling carter," who, in the days of Minden, "though he was never worth twenty shillings in his life," thought himself privileged to "damn" the beribboned captain because "we pays you,"³ in the days of the Peninsula and Waterloo, had been taught to know his place, to be respectful to his betters, and would have done less whistling had he adopted the manners of his predecessor. During the later years of the reign of George the Third there were still in London and other cities of England the "rude rabble" seen by the Prussian traveller in the early years of that reign; but no longer, as in that then "happy country," were they so apt to claim, as beyond dispute, their "rights and privileges," as "exactly or as well as their King or the King's ministers."^{*} Those only who made the attempt were doing so under the banners of "King Lud," with but slight success. A Frenchman visiting London in the days of "Louis the Desired" would have found the lower orders there probably less "insolent," and certainly less "good-natured and humane," than did his compatriot† who visited that city before the predecessor of that monarch had parted with his head. The "Fourth Estate," that in the days of the author of *Tom Jones* pushed their ideas of independence so far that there seemed to be a danger of their "rooting all the other orders out of the Commonwealth,"‡ in the days of the author of *Waverley*, had ceased to hope that they might share in the rule of the other three orders.

Lord Chesterfield has been held up for reprobation as an undue exalter of the privileges of the aristocracy, and as a despiser of the common people. Yet this haughty patrician refused a dukedom, and was "for schools and villages" to elevate the lower orders; this heartless aristocrat declared that he considered his servants and dependents as his "unfortunate friends," his "equals by

*Charles Moritz, *Travels Through Various Parts of England*.

†M. Grossley, *Observations on England*, Vol. I., pp. 84, 85.

‡Henry Fielding, *Covent Garden Journal*, Nos. 47 and 49.

FREE INSTITUTIONS AND THE REVOLUTION

nature," and his "inferiors only by the difference of their fortunes." This species of nobleman, I take it, was defunct in the days of the Regency.

When Thackeray lived and wrote there was much subserviency and little independence among the middle and lower classes of Englishmen. The creed of the former, he tells us, was "Lordolatry," and the Peerage their "second Bible." He found subjects for his *Book of Snobs* in plenty and to spare. Had he lived and written before "Mr. Washington kicked John Bull out of America," he would have found them harder to obtain. At that time the Snobby Snobkys were not yet born, and though, doubtless, the Longears, the Fitzheehaws and the De Brays were not unknown, they had not then been elevated on such high pedestals, nor so ardently worshipped by their adorers. "The habit of truckling and cringing," the "grovelling in slavish adoration" of the nobility, was not so pronounced in that earlier time, nor was England so "cursed by Mammoniacal superstition" as in the days of the satirists of Fleet Street. Indeed, Mr. Thackeray admits so much: "Never since the days of Æsop," he says, "were snobs more numerous in any land."

It is true that, in those earlier days, many of the evils condemned by Mr. Thackeray were in existence. The "sprigs of nobility," even then, "got the pick of all the places," and were captains and lieutenant-colonels at nineteen," and "commanded ships at one-and-twenty." At the Universities, even then, were "sizars and servitors," who, "because they were poor," were obliged to wear the name and badge of servitude. Even then genius was "sent to the second table," and not a large number of "pounds per annum" was "set apart" by the Government as a reward for literary excellence. But the fact that in the space of three-quarters of a century, during which time two revolutions had been successfully organized for the purpose of conferring freedom and equality upon man, these faults and follies had not been remedied or ameliorated, serves to emphasize

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

the fact that, contrary to the assertions of distinguished writers, these political upheavals had done little or nothing to affect the policy of the British Government in favor of popular rights and privileges, or to cause the British people to assert their social independence.

Surely, if it be a "demonstrable certainty" that the establishment of American independence "vindicated the supremacy of popular interests" in Great Britain, that vindication must have rivalled the mills of the gods in the slowness of its action.

Yet we are told that but for the establishment of their independence the colonists themselves would have been "enslaved," and that America would have become another Ireland." "One may doubt," writes one of the latest historians, "whether, even if the British arms had been successful, there were not political hindrances to effective and permanent control of the colonies more insuperable still. For a while, at least, government would have had to take the form of armed occupation, and it is not likely that armed occupation would ever have passed into peaceful civil administration, loyally accepted by the colonists."* Such assertions, of course, are not new; they are founded on the belief that the colonists virtually were "of one mind" in their opposition to Imperial control. Under the influence of this belief, Edmund Burke declared that had the colonists been conquered, it would have been necessary to hold them in a "subdued state by a great body of standing forces." Later writers, though their means of judging the probabilities were much superior to those of Burke, have repeated and amplified his unwarranted assertion.

That any man, with the facts upon which to found his opinion before him, with the powers to observe and a brain to reason, at this day should cherish the belief that the governing powers of the British Isles, distant a thousand leagues, and just emerging from an exhaustive war with three great military and naval powers of

**Cambridge Modern History.*

FREE INSTITUTIONS AND THE REVOLUTION

Europe, would have been able to hold in subjection, for any considerable period, against the will of the whole, a people numbering more than one-third of their own, and doubling every quarter of a century, is strange; but that men of a high order of intellect and of world-wide reputation should believe it, and teach it, approaches the marvellous. Yet, not only do they do this, but declare that the result would have been their permanent enslavement. Such beliefs, held by such men, can be accounted for only in the power of political prejudice.

Were the fact kept in mind that a large minority, or even a majority of the colonists, including the bulk of the intelligent and law-abiding, from first to last were in favor of preserving the British connection, for that reason alone, and putting aside all other obstacles, it would be seen that no "enslaving" or permanent subjection of the colonist could have resulted from the suppression of the rebellion. After the reorganization of the colonial establishments, undoubtedly there would have remained a remnant of the Disunion party, which would have been opposed to the Government. But if this party had not died out—which it is likely it would have done, for many of its rank and file would have revolted against their old leaders, in their disappointment at the non-realization of their promises—in the course of time, like the English Jacobite party, it would have ceased to plot *against* the Government, and have taken its place as a political party *within* it.

It is a curious fact that while certain British writers seem to be incapable of comprehending the possibility of the establishment of a "peaceful civil administration" of the colonies, had they been reorganized under the Imperial Government, are not at all surprised at the success of the Federal Government in its reconstruction of the Southern States, and the resulting peaceful civil administration there. This is a fact far more astonishing than the other, for, as has been said, in the colonies at least a large minority, men of culture and condition,

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

favored the maintenance of Imperial rule; while in the case of the Southern States—excepting the negroes, who had no influence, and as little knowledge of the question at issue—those who favored the Federal rule were a mere handful, and in condition mean and ignorant.

Not only do these writers express no surprise at the success of the United States in restoring peaceful government to the South, but one of them, at least, predicted that success while yet the contest for the supremacy of the North was undecided. In an article published in *Fraser's Magazine* for the month of April, 1862, Mr. John Stuart Mill declared that “the assumed difficulty of governing the Southern States as free and equal commonwealths, in case of their return to the Union, is purely imaginary.”

Just as “imaginary” is the belief that the British American colonists, had *they* “returned to the Union,” could not have been governed “as free and equal commonwealths.”

In order to support a denial of this, Ireland is always put forward as an object-lesson, never the Southern Confederacy or Canada; yet the analogy is far closer in either of these cases. In Canada there was a rebellion resembling, in many of its features, that of the thirteen colonies. The chief difference consists in the fact that the rebellion in Canada was inaugurated and supported mainly by a race alien to the suzerain power, which fact made it far more unlikely that its inhabitants would ever become a loyal and contented people under its rule. Yet this improbability has become a fact.

A few years ago the political head of that once rebellious colony—himself a member of that alien race—made a speech, and this is what he said:

“Let us remember that in the first year of the Queen’s reign there was a rebellion in this very country!

. . . Rebellion in Lower Canada, rebellion in Upper Canada. . . . Rebellion against the pernicious system of government which then prevailed. This rebellion was put down by force, and if the question had then

FREE INSTITUTIONS AND THE REVOLUTION

been put: ‘What shall be the condition of those colonies at the end of Victoria’s reign?’ the universal answer would have been: ‘Let the end of the reign be near, or let it be remote, when the end comes these rebellious colonies shall have wrenched their independence, or they shall be sullen and discontented, kept down by force.’ If, on the contrary, some one had then said: ‘You are all mistaken; when the reign comes to an end these colonies shall not be rebellious, they shall have grown up into a nation . . . under the flag of England, and that flag shall not be maintained by force, but shall be maintained by the affection and gratitude of the people.’ If such a prophecy had been made, it would have been considered as the hallucination of a visionary. But, Sir, to-day that dream is a reality, that prophecy has come true.”*

And how much more likely is it that it would have “come true” in the case of the thirteen colonies, if *their* rebellion had been “put down by force”? For in their case there was no alien population, and the descendants of the Loyalists, who so long guided the destinies of Canada and kept her within the Empire, would have remained in their native provinces, and have as loyally guided them, and made them as contented members of the Empire.

“Aye,” say some, “but the conditions had altered; England, taught by the lessons learned during the American Revolution, had reformed her colonial system, and treated her colonists with more liberality.” The errors committed by the governing powers of the Empire, in the case of the revolting colonists, says a popular British historian, “have led to that better understanding of the relations between a state and its colonies which prevails in our own day.”†

Indeed! In what does that better understanding consist? Certainly not in anything that would have affected

*Speech of Sir Wilfrid Laurier in the Dominion House of Commons, February 8, 1901.

†Knight’s *History of England*, Vol. VI., p. 172.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

the disputes between the American Disunion leaders and the Home Government, the concession of which, it is supposed, would have prevented the Revolution. The "understanding" of these gentlemen was that the Imperial Parliament had no control whatsoever over the concerns of the colonies. That was their ultimatum, without concession of which they refused to allow the colonies to remain within the Empire, even in name. Is there any British colony to-day in which such an "understanding" exists? Not one, from the vast Dominion of Canada, itself an empire in extent and resources, to the smallest and most barren rock in the Mediterranean or the Indian seas! In what other respect, then, were the relations between the Empire and its colonies affected by the achievement of American independence? Did Great Britain relax the tightness of her grasp upon her dependencies in consequence of that "portentous transaction"? On the contrary, she tightened her hold upon them. The colonies of South Africa, for instance, were held in a firmer grasp than were any of those of America, even from the beginning. And though the increasing wealth and population of the colonies and the multiform business of the Empire has made it necessary for the Home Government to forego the direct supervision of the affairs of these giant dependencies, and though the loyalty of their peoples and their attachment to the Empire has shown the wisdom of such action, yet to-day there is no colony under the folds of the Union Jack that has an administration so independent of the general Government as had the colonies of Connecticut and Rhode Island at the time they rose in rebellion against the mother country. And had that rebellion never been fomented, or had it been suppressed by force of arms, there is no good reason for doubting that, in the course of a generation or so, the other American colonies would have been accorded as liberal a form of government as they. It is a fact of some significance, too, that while parliamentary control, upon the abrogation of which the Disunion leaders insisted

FREE INSTITUTIONS AND THE REVOLUTION

as a condition precedent to peace, still prevails in the colonies, the Imperial regulation of colonial commerce, with which those gentlemen expressed themselves content, and the maintenance of which was insisted upon by Chatham and the other "friends of America," has been swept away with other relics of legislation of the dark ages.

We have had the assurance of Sir Wilfrid Laurier that rebellious colonies "put down by force" may become contented with the colonial relation, and may feel affection and gratitude to the motherland. What of those rebellious colonies that were not put down by force, but succeeded in wresting their independence from the motherland? Are they affectionate and grateful?

In the same speech Premier Laurier said: "Towards the end of the eighteenth century, all the colonies of England in America, with the single exception of the French colony of Quebec, claimed their independence, and obtained it by force of arms. The contest was a long and arduous one. It left in the breast of the new nation which was then born a feeling of—shall I say the word?—yes, a feeling of hatred, which continued from generation to generation."*

Thus it is. Affection from the subdued; hatred from the unsubdued! That "unreasonable and virulent anti-English feeling" which, Mr. Roosevelt declares, may be excused but cannot be justified,† that is so strongly rooted in the minds of all born on the soil of the United States that it is ready to spring into life and bear the fruit of vituperation and misrepresentation whenever those minds are stirred with emotions of anger against the Government or people of Great Britain, be they ever so unfounded. And they will ever be thus stirred so long as demagogues live and have influence with the people. And this hatred is not cherished alone by the progeny of those who, thinking themselves oppressed by

*Speech of Sir Wilfrid Laurier before cited.

†*Gouverneur Morris*, p. 228.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Britain, sought to free themselves from her control. By irony of circumstances, it is shared to the fullest extent, not only by the descendants of the Loyalists, who desired to maintain good relations with the motherland, but by the stalwart sons of Britain, who, like the Janizaries of Turkey, have been taught to hate the people from whom they sprung.

The cause for this difference is easily explained. In the case of the United States it has been for the advantage of demagogic statesmen to arouse vindictive feelings against the motherland, and to boast of their triumphs over her. Thus vindictiveness and vainglory have combined to incite in the minds of each rising generation of American citizens feelings of hatred and contempt for the Government and people that, they have been taught to believe, oppressed them, and over whom they suppose they have been victorious in war. In the case of Canada, of course, no such advantage could have been gained by her statesmen—or demagogues, if she had any—by inciting ill-will against the Government or people of the motherland; if such had been essayed, it would have been of no avail against the influence of the Loyalists. Peace, order and content have been the result, combined with a larger patriotism that is not bounded by geographical lines, but bridges the great seas and extends to all who own the name of Briton. Whether this will be lasting may only be conjectured, but, at any rate, it exists to-day.

But Mr. Roosevelt goes further than merely to assert that the Revolution gave freedom to America and Great Britain; he would extend the benefit to all mankind. As has been said, he asserts that the revolting colonists, by establishing their independence, vitally affected the welfare of the whole human race. And the way they did it was this: "They settled, once for all, that thereafter the people of English stock should spread at will over the world's waste spaces, keeping all their old liberties and winning new ones; and they took the first and longest step in establishing the great principle that

FREE INSTITUTIONS AND THE REVOLUTION

thenceforth those Europeans who by their strength and daring founded new states, should be deemed to have done so for their own benefit as freemen, and not for the benefit of their more timid, lazy or contented brethren who stayed behind.”*

Now, all this is rather confusing, as well as inaccurate, and assuming conclusions not proved or provable. It is not very clear how the spreading of the people of English stock over the world’s waste spaces, keeping their old and acquiring new liberties—by the way, how does Mr. Roosevelt know that it *is* settled once for all that they should do this?—it is not very clear how this has vitally affected the welfare of any of the human race, except themselves, unless by wiping a good part of it off the face of the earth; and this, I suppose, is not Mr. Roosevelt’s meaning. As to his other assertions: As a scholar in the classics, Mr. Roosevelt should know, and doubtless does know, that the “principle,” if principle it may be called, that emigrants seeking homes in lands other than their own did so for their own benefit, and not for that of the state, was recognized and put in practice by the Phœnician monarchy and the Hellenic democracies a couple of millenniums or so before his progenitors began to trouble their heads about it; so that these gentlemen could not have taken “the first” step, long or short, in that direction. To be sure, the Phœnicians were not “Europeans,” but that is a detail which, I suppose, would not affect Mr. Roosevelt’s “principle.” Then, too, Mr. Roosevelt’s sneer at the stay-at-homes is scarcely in good taste, especially coming from one the history of whose people goes far to disprove it. He overlooks the fact that there are duties and obligations which keep men in their native land, even though they be neither timid, lazy, nor contented; and that, perhaps, the reasons which cause men to leave it are not altogether due to their superior strength and daring. When the famed Pilgrim Fathers left the home

**Gouverneur Morris*, p. 6.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

of their nativity to seek an asylum in the wilderness of the New World, in order to enjoy the liberty of conscience, they, in fact, turned their backs on the field where the battle for that liberty of conscience was to be fought; left it to be fought and won by their brethren who had elected to stay and bear the brunt of it. This fact, alone, should have given Mr. Roosevelt pause ere, by inference, he condemned these stay-at-homes as timid and lazy weaklings. Another fact worth his while to remember is that for generations his strong and daring forefathers were content to depend on their British cousins for protection against domestic and foreign foes. These facts might have taught him that strength and daring are not universal attributes of colonists, or timidity and laziness those of the stay-at-homes.

Mr. Roosevelt's worst enemy, if he have any, would not think of accusing him of being a visionary, yet it would seem that in making the assertion that the accomplishment of American independence has given freedom to the whole human race, or to such part of it as possesses it, he has held his imagination with a slack rein. In this view he is opposed by two distinguished Englishmen, of diverse political faith, but equally famed as publicists and close students of the history and institutions of the United States.

Mr. James Bryce, in a recently written article, asserts that the very desire for free institutions is passing from the minds of the peoples of Western Europe. In England, "you hear very little said about the British constitution," while forty or fifty years ago it was in everybody's mouth. Not only is there "very much less of a demand for freedom," but "there is less outspoken and general sympathy for any people or race struggling for freedom or nationality;" while, until forty or fifty years ago, "from the days of Lord Byron downward, we had in England a warm sympathy for all oppressed people," and, he asserts, "the same thing is true of Germany." In Germany, "there was a great deal of republican sentiment," but it is now replaced by "a feeling in favor of

FREE INSTITUTIONS AND THE REVOLUTION

a strong monarchy." In France there is a republic in name, but, says Mr. Bryce, those who support it the most earnestly do so because they believe it to be the strongest government obtainable.

The cause of this, asserts Mr. Bryce, arises, in part, at least, from "disappointment with the results achieved by liberty, by nationality. . . . Free governments have been established over nearly the whole civilized world, and foreign rule has been expelled, but the haven of happiness and peace has not been reached. The ground has been cleared of old weeds, but new weeds have sprung up instead." There are, he says, "still quarrels and factions, and still fraud and self-seeking ambition, some corruption, and a great deal of discontent." "There is hardly a legislature in Europe or anywhere else which is nearly as good as the legislatures of fifty years ago." And then, "freedom and nationality were expected to bring about universal peace. They haven't." The ambition of monarchs was thought to have caused most wars; but now: "Republics have been found quite as apt to be carried away by passion and by their sentiments as the monarchs of previous time were."*

Taking it all in all, Mr. Bryce has failed to see the boon to the human race conferred by the rage for "self-government," the fashion for which was set by the American revolutionists.

Mr. Lecky is equally pessimistic. "On the whole," he writes, "American democracy appears to me to carry with it at least as much of warning as of encouragement, especially when the singularly favorable circumstances under which the experiment has been tried" [is considered]. Democracy, Mr. Lecky insists, is not conducive to liberty or morality; the legislatures become degraded with its growth. "It is being generally discovered," he says, "that the system which places the supreme power in the hands of mere majorities, consist-

*An article published by an American newspaper syndicate about the time of the arrival of Mr. Bryce in the United States.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

ing necessarily of the poorest and most ignorant, whatever else it may do, does not produce parliaments of the most surpassing excellence. . . . Intriguers and demagogues, playing successfully on the passions and credulity of the ignorant and of the poor, form one of the great characteristic evils and dangers of our time.”*

So Liberal and Conservative are as one in the expression of the belief that the idea of “self-government,” spread broadcast to the world by the American Revolutionists, has not vitally affected the whole human race in a manner altogether beneficial.

*Published by the same syndicate about the same time.

CHAPTER XIII.

WHAT DO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE OWE TO THE REVOLUTION?

If the American Revolution and resulting independence did not advance the growth of the free institutions of Great Britain; if it did not rescue its people and those of the colonies from arbitrary rule; if it did not give freedom to the world, what effect did it have upon the welfare and happiness of the people of the sovereign states it created? During the century and a quarter of their enjoyment of "self-government," have they been, and are they now, a freer, a more just, a more moral, honest, peaceful and contented people than they would have been had they remained subjects of the Empire?

In an attempt to answer these questions—which, to use the words of Washington, must be but "a speculative apprehension"—it were well to consider what the inhabitants of these sovereign states preserved to themselves, acquired, failed to acquire or lost, which, as dependent colonies, they would not have preserved, acquired or lost.

In the first place, they preserved the institution of slavery for, perhaps, two generations longer than they would have preserved it under Imperial rule.

In 1834, at a cost to her people of twenty millions of pounds sterling, England gave freedom to the slaves in all her dependencies. Had it not been for the gathering storm of the French Revolution, a consequence of American independence, there is good reason to believe that this emancipation would have been accomplished forty years before that time, during the administration of the

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

younger Pitt; or, if not then, almost certainly during the succeeding administration of Fox. Had the thirteen colonies continued to be members of the Empire, they would have been participants in its benefits. As it was, the curse of slavery remained with them for sixty or seventy years longer, with continually increasing evil effects, then to be destroyed, not by the expressed wish, or at the willingly given cost of their people, but as an incident of one of the bloodiest wars of the century.

For, unfortunately, it was never the desire of the "people" of the United States, but only that of a comparatively small number of their philanthropic, self-sacrificing citizens, that slavery should be abolished throughout the Union. At the period of the Revolution—with a few, a very few, honorable exceptions—the Disunionists, both North and South, favored that institution. However they might bawl of "Liberty" and "Natural Rights," their vehement rage for those rights was stayed at the color line. Hence, the taunt of the Loyalist versifier that, at one and the same time, they were

"maintaining that all humankind
Are, have been, and shall be as free as the wind,
Yet impaling and burning their slaves for believing
The truth of these lessons they're constantly giving."*

It is usual to associate Abolition principles with the people of the New England States. But it should be remembered that, at the time of the Revolution, they were not only slave-holders, but slave-traders, engaged in that infernal traffic to supply the planters of the South with negroes kidnapped on the West Coast of Africa, or purchased, with a few puncheons of rum, from some savage chief of that country.¹

It is the less surprising, then, however incongruous it may seem, that in the Boston journal in which was first published that famous declaration, proclaiming to the world that all men were created equal, and endowed

**The Loyalist Poetry of the Revolution*, p. 58.

WHAT AMERICANS OWE THE REVOLUTION

by their Creator with the inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, there should also have been published, side by side with this immortal charter of freedom, an advertisement offering a reward for the return of a runaway slave. Perhaps a little more surprising is the fact that, near the same time, Samuel Adams, reputed Puritan, the father of the Revolution, and a very apostle of freedom, in a speech urging the rejection of all conciliatory overtures from the British Government, numbered among the crimes committed by that Government against the liberty-loving colonists the alleged fact that it had "*taught treachery to their slaves.*"* An appeal for freedom and a defence of slavery in the same breath!

Before the American Revolution had advanced beyond its first stage, England's greatest Chief Justice, following ancient precedent, had declared that the air of Great Britain was too pure to be breathed by a slave.² After it had been consummated in independence, an American, a native of New England, upon whose shoulders the ermined mantle of a Chief Justice was about to fall, in a speech on the framing of the Federal Constitution, proposed to legalize the slave-trade, because the negroes "*died so fast in the sickly rice swamps*" that it was necessary periodically to replenish them with healthier ones fresh from their African homes. By these means, he declared, all parts of the United States would be "*enriched;*"³ the South, of course, from the results of the labor of these human cattle, and his own section from the profits derived from their kidnapping and sale.

So much of "human rights" had ten years of uninterrupted enjoyment of the pursuit of happiness, wrung from the tyrannical Briton, taught these enthusiastic devotees of liberty. Here was "liberty" indeed! Liberty worth fighting and dying for. Liberty to "enrich" themselves by means of the unrequited labor of their fellow-creatures, torn from their native land and trans-

*Speech of Samuel Adams, August 1, 1776.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

ported to a strange country, there to spend a few short years in ceaseless, hopeless toil, awaiting an untimely death as the only hope of a surcease of their sorrows.

As for *them*, what mattered it? *They* had never put forth a Declaration to charm the world with philanthropic theses. What had *they* to do with the Law of Nature and of Nations? Evidently the Creator had not endowed *them* with Inalienable Rights! And if they must pursue happiness, let them pursue it (though they never overtake it) in the pestilent rice swamps of the South, where neither Life nor Liberty will trouble them long.

What if there were stories told of despairing wretches permitted to come upon the decks of those floating hells, the slave ships, there, for a few blissful moments, to breathe the balmy air of heaven—not in mercy, but lest they should draw their last breath in their fetid prison-house, and so the “ Sons of Liberty,” who had bought them, body and soul, with their dollars, and whose “ property ” they were, should be the less “ enriched ”? What if there were stories told of such wretched beings, so lost to hope as to choose death rather than life, gladly seeking it in the dark waters, sinking beneath the waves with an exultant cry, happy to have escaped the bondage prepared for them in the “ Land of the Free ”? What if there were such tales? they were beneath the notice of the philanthropic statesmen who were busy proclaiming liberty to all mankind.

The American Revolutionists had acclaimed the supremacy of Natural Law. Mr. Justice Blackstone, to be sure, had declared that slavery was repugnant both to reason and natural law,* and they had often quoted Mr. Blackstone as an authority to sustain their contention that they had a right to “ govern themselves.” But as it was inexpedient to adopt *all* of the principles laid down by the illustrious commentator, this one was conveniently ignored, and slavery, with all the cruelty and

*Blackstone's *Commentaries*, Book I., Chap. XIV., p. 423.

WHAT AMERICANS OWE THE REVOLUTION

degradation that ever attends it, was accepted by the people of the Great Republic as a necessary and righteous institution.

So it happened that such as he who "dreamed of freedom in the arms of a slave, and, waking, sold her offspring and his own," might still be accounted a "wise and pure statesman." So it happened that, some two generations after their independence had been attained, in the town of New England in which the first agitation for its attainment was begun; among the descendants of those fierce seekers after liberty, in sight of their boasted Temple of Liberty itself; in the full glare of day, a brave and stainless friend of humanity* was dragged through the streets by a ferocious mob—a mob composed, not of the dregs of humanity, but, as asserted by the *Boston Gazette*, a "gentlemanly rabble," a "meeting of gentlemen of property and standing, from all parts of the city"—bent upon his murder, for the crime of having dared to assert that men with curled hair and swarthy complexions were entitled to some of the "rights" which their forefathers had declared to be inherent in all mankind. So it happened that more than sixty years after the curse of slavery had been inflicted upon the people of the United States by the framers of their federal Government, a great and honored statesman of Massachusetts, whose name to-day is reverenced as that of one of the world's exponents of freedom, contemptuously referred to that noble and unselfish minority of his countrymen, striving to erase from the scrolls of the law that shameful stain, as "silly women and sillier men," "fanatical and fantastical" agitators, seeking political recognition by their "clamor and nonsense;" exhorted his fellow-freemen of the North to "fulfil with alacrity" the provisions of a law of the federal Government that imposed upon them the dishonorable office of slave-catchers for their Southern fellow-citizens; and in the same breath asserted that that Government had "trodden down no

*William Lloyd Garrison, Editor of *The Liberator*.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

man's liberty," and that "its daily respiration" was "liberty and patriotism."* So it happened that the highest official of one of the proudest of the federated States eulogized slavery as of all institutions the most "manifestly consistent with the will of God;" and asserted that "the capacity to enjoy freedom" was conferred by Him "as a reward of merit, and only upon those who are qualified to enjoy it." "Domestic slavery," the distinguished gentleman declared, amid "prolonged applause," "is the cornerstone of our republican edifice," and that no "patriot" should "tolerate the idea of emancipation at any period, however remote." For himself, he piously asseverated, "God forbid that my descendants, in the remotest generation, should live in any other than a country having domestic slavery."†

At the very time that this distinguished and, no doubt, "wise and pure" American was uttering these words, an Englishman, not at all distinguished, but perhaps not entirely destitute of wisdom and purity, while travelling in the border States, encountered a gang of slaves—"manacled and chained to each other"—being driven South by a slave-dealer. This spectacle did not impress him as evidence that the institution of slavery was God-given. On the contrary, it excited his horror and disgust. "I have never seen so revolting a sight before," he declared. "Driven by white men, with liberty and equality in their mouths, to a distant and unhealthy country, . . . where the duration of life for a sugar-mill slave does not exceed seven years.⁴ . . . Tearing, without an instant's notice, the husband from the wife and the children from the parents."⁵ The sight was as amazing as it was repulsive.

A few years later, another Englishman—this one very

*Curtis's *Life of Daniel Webster*, Vol. II., p. 427. Speech of Daniel Webster on "The Constitution and the Union," March 7, 1850.

†Message of George McDuffie, Governor of South Carolina, Journal of the Assembly of South Carolina, 1835: *American History Leaflets*, No. 10.

WHAT AMERICANS OWE THE REVOLUTION

distinguished indeed, and no less great-hearted*—visited the Land of the Free, and recorded his impressions of slavery as it existed there. “Cash for Negroes,” “Cash for Negroes,” “Cash for Negroes!” in staring letters, greeted him from the columns of the journals as soon as he arrived in the slave zone; accompanied by “wood-cuts of a runaway negro, with manacled hands, crouching beneath a bluff pursuer, who, having caught him, grasps him by the throat; journals in which “the leading article protests against ‘that abominable and hellish doctrine of abolition, which is repugnant alike to every law of God and Nature.’”

He visited the Halls of Congress, where, he tells us, but a week before, “an aged, gray-haired man, a lasting honor to the land that gave him birth, . . . who will be remembered scores upon scores of years after the worms bred in its corruption are so many grains of dust—it was but a week since this old man had stood for days upon his trial before this very body, charged with having dared to assert the infamy of that traffic which has for its accursed merchandise men and women and their unborn children. Yes; and publicly exhibited in the same city all the while, gilded, framed and glazed; hung up for general admiration; shown to strangers, not with shame, but pride; its face not turned towards the wall, itself not taken down and burned, is the Unanimous Declaration of the Thirteen United States of America, which solemnly declares that All Men are Created Equal, and are endowed by their Creator with the Inalienable Rights of Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness! . . . There was but a week to come, and another of that body . . . would be tried, found guilty, and have strong censure passed upon him by the rest. His was a grave offence indeed! For, years before, he had risen up and said: ‘A gang of male and female slaves for sale, warranted to breed like cattle, linked to each other by iron fetters, are passing now along the street, beneath the windows of your

*Charles Dickens.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Temple of Equality! Look! But there are many kinds of hunters engaged in the Pursuit of Happiness, and they go variously armed. It is the Inalienable Right of some among them to take the field after *their* happiness, equipped with cat and cartwhip, stocks and iron collar, and to shout their view halloo! (always in praise of Liberty) to the music of clanking chains and bloody stripes."

There were some among the "owners, breeders, buyers and sellers of slaves"—"a miserable aristocracy, spawned of a false republic"—who, he declared, with a prophetic voice, would, until "the bloody chapter has a bloody end, own, breed, use, buy and sell them, at all hazards; who doggedly deny the horrors of the system in the teeth of such a mass of evidence as never was brought to bear on any other subject, and to which the experience of every day contributes its immense amount; who would, at this or any other moment, gladly involve America in a war, civil or foreign, provided that it had for its sole end and object the assertion of their right to perpetuate slavery, and to whip and work and torture slaves, unquestioned by human authority, and unassailed by any human power; who, when they speak of Freedom, mean the freedom to oppress their kind, and to be savage, merciless and cruel, and of whom every man on his own ground, in republican America, is a more exacting and a sterner and a less responsible despot than the Caliph Haroun Alraschid in his angry robe of scarlet."

"Public opinion," he was told, would protect the slave from extreme cruelty. In utter scorn of this palpable fallacy, he replied: "Public opinion has knotted the lash, heated the branding-iron, loaded the rifle and shielded the murderer. Public opinion threatens the abolitionist with death if he venture to the South, and drags him with a rope about his middle, in broad, unblushing noon, through the first city in the East. Public opinion has, within a few years, burned a slave alive at a slow fire in the city of St. Louis; and public opinion has, to this day, maintained upon the bench that

WHAT AMERICANS OWE THE REVOLUTION

estimable judge who charged the jury impanelled to try his murderers, that their most horrid deed was an act of public opinion, and, being so, must not be punished by the laws the public sentiment had made. Public opinion hailed this doctrine with a howl of wild applause, and set the prisoners free to walk the city, men of mark and influence and station, as they had been before."

Men whipped, ironed, branded, tortured and burned alive; women "harried by brutal overseers in their time of travail, and becoming mothers on the field of toil, under the very lash itself." So much had this cherished institution of slavery done for the slave; for the master, what? "Who has read in youth, and seen his virgin sisters read, descriptions of runaways, men and women, and their disfigured persons, which could not be published elsewhere of so much stock upon a farm, or at a show of beasts—do we not know that that man, whenever his wrath is kindled up, will be a brutal savage? Do we not know that as he is a coward in his domestic life, stalking among his shrinking men and women slaves, armed with his heavy whip, so he will be a coward out-of-doors, and, carrying cowards' weapons hidden in his breast, will shoot men down and stab them when he quarrels? . . . These are the weapons of Freedom. With sharp points and edges such as these, Liberty in America hews and hacks her slaves; or, failing that pursuit, her sons devote them to a better use, and turn them on each other."

Adam Smith declared that the history of all ages and nations supported the belief that "the condition of a slave is better under an arbitrary than under a free government." If by a free government Mr. Smith meant a democracy, the reason for this fact—for fact it is—is not far to seek. The lowest orders in a democracy, where it is pretended there are no orders at all, claiming as much honor and dignity as the highest, are eager to emphasize their claim by a constant manifestation of their contempt for those who are placed beneath all orders. Whereas, under an arbitrary government, the despot or

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

oligarchs at the head of it, being above all orders alike, and regarding them all as equally below them, are inclined to exercise their power to restrain cruelty among them, as a schoolmaster checks a like disposition among his pupils. In a democracy there is no Augustus to restrain and punish the cruelties of the Vadius Pollios among its citizens.

Accordingly, in the American colonies, and, thereafter, in the United States, we find that the laws were not enacted for the protection of the slaves against the cruelty of the masters, but for the protection of the masters against penalties for cruelty to their slaves. Especially were they designed to perpetuate the institution, and as much as possible to keep the negro, free and slave, in a condition of brutal ignorance.

In every State the law rejected the testimony of a slave as against a white man, so that it was impossible to convict the master of the murder of his slave, if there were no white witnesses of the act. If such a one chose to flog his slave to death, the law charitably inferred that it was an accident, since no man could be supposed deliberately to deprive himself of his own *property*, while punishment, from simple flogging to—as in New York—death at the stake, was prescribed for offences committed by slaves.*

In some of the States, by a clause in their constitutions, the power to pass emancipating laws was denied to the legislatures unless the consent of the owners was obtained. In some, the master himself was denied the privilege of freeing his own slaves without the consent of the legislatures. In most, if not all, of the States, the fact of one being, or seeming to be, a negro, mulatto or quadroon was deemed *prima facie* evidence of slave birth, and was sufficient to consign such a one—and has consigned many—though actually a freeman, to a life of slavery.

Even though acknowledged to be free, those with a perceptible drop of negro blood in their veins were, by

*See Kent's *Commentaries* for the laws relating to slaves in the several States.

WHAT AMERICANS OWE THE REVOLUTION

the laws, degraded to a pariah caste, by a denial of political and social privileges. They were excluded from the society of white people in the hotels, houses of entertainment and public conveyances; and it was a penal act to enter into marital relations with them. This last provision, indeed, to-day is in force in many of the States.

Still further precautions were taken by the laws to prevent the subject race rising to an equality with the governing class. It was made a crime, punishable for both parties, for a white person to teach a negro to read or write. This was common to all the slave States, and some of the so-called free States. In one of the latter, whose constitution as a colony had been the freest and most independent of them all, whose people had been among the first and fiercest to demand release from the shackles imposed upon them by Great Britain, fifty years after its independence had been won, by statute made it a penal offence to establish a school for the instruction of persons of negro blood or descent, coming to the State for that purpose, without the consent, in writing, of the authorities of the town or district in which such school was situated. And some persons were prosecuted and convicted under the provisions of this act.*

Laws making it penal, by preaching the gospel, or otherwise, to teach a slave or a free negro that he had any pre-eminence above the beasts were common to all the slave States. In one, by a statute of peculiar atrocity, that would have been thought barbarous in the Dark Ages, any person who, by conversation, signs or actions, said or did anything having a tendency to cause insubordination among the slaves, or discontent among the free negroes, or who should bring into the State any paper, book or pamphlet which, in the judgment of the court, might have a like tendency, incurred the penalty of death.†

*This was in the State of Connecticut, which as a British province had had the freest constitution of all.

†In the State of Louisiana. See Kent's *Commentaries*, Part IV., p. 254.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Abolition, declared Alexander H. Stephens, of Georgia, was "a species of insanity." So enamored of Equal Rights was *this* "wise and pure" statesman that he claimed for them the virtue of according to his fellow-citizens the privilege of transforming free soil into a domain for slavery. In a speech delivered a year or two before the breaking out of the Civil War, he loudly proclaimed the right of the people of the South to go to the territories with their slave property, protected by the constitution, *on a platform of Equal Rights*. Such a settlement, he declared, would be a "triumph of truth and right."

Mr. Jefferson Davis, too, talked of the *abstract right* of holding the negro in bondage, and urged the repeal of the law prohibiting the slave trade, which had been passed by Congress nearly forty years before. "The free, intelligent, high-minded sons of the governing race," he declared, "were made stronger by the presence of a due proportion of the servile caste," and "the good of society" required that the latter "should be kept in their normal condition of servitude."

At the time of the Revolution, not only black, but white slavery—in a modified form—existed in the colonies, and continued there to exist long after they had ceased to be colonies. At that time, in the same journals in which were to be seen advertisements for the return of runaway negroes, were also to be seen advertisements for the return of runaway white people. These were either indentured servants who had sold themselves or been sold by their creditors into slavery for a term of years, or convicts whose services during the period of their sentence had been apportioned to farmers, merchants or others. In either case their slavery was complete while their terms lasted. From the frequent occurrence in these advertisements of such names as Michael and Dennis, and other names of Milesian origin, it would appear that a large proportion of these white slaves were of Irish nationality, or else that those of that nationality were more impatient of restraint than others.

WHAT AMERICANS OWE THE REVOLUTION

All this had made the American colonists more familiar with, and more tolerant of, enforced labor, even in the case of men of their own race, than their British cousins. So familiar had it become that the system of indentured service, and laws restraining the freedom of their own citizens—always with a view to “property”—were retained and enacted long after their independence was achieved.

During the reign of Edward VI., in order to restrain the license of the hordes of sturdy vagabonds that roamed through the country begging, stealing and murdering, a law was enacted providing for the enslavement of such as had no means of livelihood and refused to work. But, says Blackstone: “The spirit of the nation would not brook this condition, even in the most abandoned rogues; and, therefore, this statute was repealed two years afterwards.”* This hatred of slavery was manifested by Englishmen in the sixteenth century; yet in the eighteenth, and even far into the nineteenth, laws of a similar character were enacted and put in practice in many of the states of the Union; and, strange to say, a survival of the practice exists to-day in at least one state, and in many others a reminder of it may be seen in the form of the various “chain-gangs” to be found in their cities. Of course, the harshness of the execution of these laws became modified as the amenities of society increased, but in their mildest form they were extremely degrading. The spectacle of the citizen of a community, whose only crime, perhaps, was want of thrift or energy, a too-great generosity, or a disinclination to take advantage of the necessities of his neighbors, placed upon an auction-block and sold to the highest bidder must have been anything but elevating to the morals of the rising generations of America, and induced in their minds the conviction that poverty was the greatest of crimes. Certainly such a practice would not have been tolerated in England, even in the eighteenth cen-

*Blackstone's *Commentaries*, Book I., Chap. XIV., p. 424.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

tury, with all her bloody statutes then in force; where public hangings for trivial crimes, and public pillorings for, sometimes, no crime at all, were not uncommon. But poverty was not among the crimes there punished by direct process of law. In spite of a general belief to the contrary, induced by the writings of her great satirists, the poor-laws of England in the eighteenth century were not illiberal or cruel.

Another legacy bequeathed to the American people by the Revolution was the war between the States, fought at the expense of some half million of lives, and at a cost, to the North alone, of more than three thousand millions of dollars—a war that never would have occurred had the colonies remained members of the Empire.

Still another is the prevalence of the barbarous and shocking homicides committed in the name of Justice, but equally opposed to justice as to law; homicides, in many instances, perpetrated in a manner that should be revolting to the veriest savage. Though the manner of their doing be attributable in no small degree to the ruffianly habits acquired by men of a low order of intelligence in an atmosphere of slavery, yet the system, as its name imports, may be traced directly to the acts of the revolutionists. It began, at that period, in the outrages committed upon the Loyalists, and took the name it now bears from one Charles Lynch, a self-made magistrate of Bedford County, Virginia, from his exceptional ardor in prompting and assisting these lawless proceedings. They have increased in frequency until, at the present time, their number has become appalling. According to data gathered with great care by Professor James Elbert Cutler, during the space of twenty-two years, ending in the year 1903, 3,337 people were put to death by means of this horrible burlesque of law, sixty-three of whom were women—forty negresses and twenty-three white women.

As will be inferred from the last-mentioned fact, by no means a large majority of the alleged crimes for

WHAT AMERICANS OWE THE REVOLUTION

which the victims were done to death were sexual offences, as is sometimes asserted, but included many others, some of the most trivial character; among which are enumerated by Professor Cutler, passing counterfeit money, enticing away servants, and one—which recalls the days of the Revolution—for “being obnoxious.” The learned writer sums up with truth, and in terms not too severe, it must be admitted: “The existence of the practice of lynching in the United States is a national disgrace.”* With equal truth he might have added that that national disgrace was a direct legacy of the Revolution.

This is what an editor of a law journal published in Rochester, New York, has to say about the miscarriage of criminal justice in the United States at the present day:

“The record of crime in the United States has gone on increasing in blackness until it has made us conspicuously alone among the civilized nations of the world. Only a penal colony to which all the rest of the world transported its worst criminals could show such an appalling list of crimes as are committed in this enlightened nation. . . . This nation, standing well-nigh, if not quite, at the head of all the nations of the world in most of the elements of civilization, stands far below the worst of them all in its horrible record of crime. The Alabama Bar Association . . . gives statistics to show the number of homicides committed in various parts of the United States annually, as compared with those in the city of London. It shows that, in proportion to the population, homicides in New York are 12 times as numerous as they are in London; in California they are 75 times as numerous as in London; while in Nevada they are about 245 times as numerous as in London. That is to say, New York, with nearly a million less inhabitants than London, has 254 homicides annually, while London has only 24;

*James Elbert Cutler, *Lynch Law: An Investigation into the History of Lynching in the United States*.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

California, with less than one-fourth the population of London, has 422 homicides against 24 in London. No amplification of the facts, no comment upon them, can do more than weaken their appalling force.* Another great city of the United States has a larger proportion of homicides even than New York. "Human life is the cheapest thing in Chicago," recently said Judge Cleland, of that city; it "witnesses a murder for every day in the year." Though this is too high an estimate, statistics showing an average of 165 homicides for the four years from 1903 to 1906, yet the truth is sufficiently striking.

From the results of the American Revolution—as a consequence of distorted views of liberty and the "Rights of Man" thereby engendered—should not be omitted that violation of the sanctity of the marriage relation, and the resultant disinclination to fulfil parental obligations, that are such prominent features of society in the United States to-day. That this assumption is not too "speculative" is indicated, or at least suggested, by available statistics.

The granting of divorce for trivial causes began in the State of Connecticut a few years after the adoption of the federal constitution; since which time the system has spread to other States in a constantly increasing ratio; so that to-day, in nearly all of them, divorce can be had for the asking—if not according to the exact letter of the law, yet by well-understood devices, easy of practice by a husband or wife desirous of severing the marriage relation—and the number procured is in full proportion to the ease of their procurement.

How does this condition compare with that existing in the mother country, or in that American colony that rejected the boon of independence?

In a report issued in 1889 by the United States Bureau of Labor is contained the following data:

In 1867, in the United States (with a population of

*Editorial in *Case and Comment*, Rochester, N.Y., August, 1907.

WHAT AMERICANS OWE THE REVOLUTION

35,000,000), were granted 9,337 divorces; or, approximately, one in every three thousand seven hundred of their population.

In the same year, in Great Britain (with a population of 25,000,000), were granted 162 divorces; or, approximately one in every one hundred and fifty-four thousand of her population.

In 1868, in the Dominion of Canada (with a population of 3,500,000), were granted four (!) divorces; or, one in eight hundred and seventy-five thousand of her population.

In 1886, in the United States (with a population of 57,000,000), were granted 25,535 divorces; or, approximately, one in twenty-two hundred of their population.

In the same year, in Great Britain (with a population of 30,000,000), were granted 468 divorces; or, approximately, one in sixty-four thousand of her population.

In the same year, in the Dominion of Canada (with a population of 4,500,000), were granted nine divorces; or one in five hundred thousand of her population.

The last item is not derived from the report of the United States Labor Bureau, but is authentic.

So that, in 1867, the number of divorces in the United States, compared, on a *per capita* basis, with those in Great Britain, is as forty-two to one; and compared with those in Canada, is as two hundred and thirty-six to one.

A similar comparison of the divorces granted in 1886 shows the United States, compared with Great Britain, as thirty to one; and with Canada, two hundred and twenty-seven to one.

The latest of these statistics are twenty years old. A report now in preparation by the United States Census Bureau will show a phenomenal and appalling increase in the number of divorces in the United States. Those in Great Britain, also, will be found to have increased to a noticeable extent, and those in Canada slightly.

Perhaps it might be considered too far-fetched to attribute the increase in divorces in Great Britain to the

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

"Americanization" of the mother country, so agreeable to Mr. Stead; but, at least, it is not unreasonable to attribute the slight increase in the number of divorces granted in Canada to the great influx of Americans into British Columbia and the North-West Territories during the past decade.

When, throughout the United States, is heard constant and ever-growing complaints of corruption in public affairs—corruption in the national and state legislatures; corruption in the city and county governments, corruption even in the courts—the ermine of justice besmirched with "graft"—it is inevitable that the student of Revolutionary history should associate these evils in his mind with the "want of public virtue," the "low arts," the "insatiable thirst for riches" and the "lust of gain" attributed to his countrymen by the first President of the United States; and the "infinity of corruption," the "spirit of venality," the "universal idolatry to the mammon of unrighteousness," the "want of principle," and the avarice and ambition which his successor declared was "too deeply rooted in the hearts and education" of the people of the new republic "ever to be eradicated." And if there be rascals among the state and federal lawmakers, it is equally inevitable that they should be regarded by such students as the legitimate successors of those in the Second Continental Congress so caustically condemned by John Jay and Gouverneur Morris.

That root of all evil, the love of money, is not easily extirpated; it will survive in the face of storms and upheavals. "Property"—so intimately associated with the Revolutionary propaganda—its acquisition and preservation, has remained foremost in the minds and affections of the people of the Great Republic ever since its establishment. Some half-century after that event, America's greatest writer* proclaimed to the world that "the Almighty Dollar" was the "great object of universal devotion" among his countrymen. To-day, if

*Washington Irving.

WHAT AMERICANS OWE THE REVOLUTION

that devotion be not universal among the citizens of the United States, it is certain that the schismatics are few and the backsliders non-existent. To this almost universal adulation of wealth, too, may be attributed that pernicious administration of the criminal law in the several States, which—to use the words of a journal which for worth and ability is unsurpassed by any between the two oceans—"puts a premium upon crime committed by a rich man, . . . thus outraging propriety, making a mock of the law, and reducing to an absurdity the boast that all men are equal in a court of justice."* A condition of affairs foreshadowing a social status in which "Self" shall be pre-eminent; a society in which the race for wealth shall be so absorbing and ruthless that a Good Samaritan stooping to succor a wounded traveller would be crushed by the onrush of Priests and Levites hastening to overtake the robbers and share in the spoil.

But Mr. Roosevelt proudly asserts that, "where so many other nations teach by their mistakes, we [the United States] are among the few who teach by their successes."†

What constitutes "success" in a nation? If to be successful a nation should have for its citizens a people, not only rich and prosperous, but of pure ideals, devoted to public and private duty; with love for all that is honest and true and benevolent, and hatred for all that is false and mean, dishonest and cruel; devoted to their families and homes, and willing to sacrifice much to make life fuller and happier for their fellows; if its statesmen, discarding all selfish views, should devote their time and their energy solely for the good of the people, and disdain to take advantage of their exalted stations to further their own interests—aspirations surely worthy of the successors of those who set up a government founded on the Rights of Man—if these be

**The New York Nation.*

†*Gouverneur Morris*, p. 144.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

national successes, then it would seem that Mr. Roosevelt has boasted too soon, and that, after all, the Great Republic may have taught, and be teaching, by its mistakes, as well as other nations.

If any nation were fitted to acquire success surely it was the United States. Beginning its national life possessed of vast and rich territories; unhampered by ancient restraints of law and custom; with full knowledge of the experience of other countries, and prepared to follow or avoid their examples, according as the result had been beneficial or harmful; the Great Republic has cause to thank Providence for priceless boons. To it much has been given; yet it is to be feared that if it were called to an accounting by the Judge of Nations, it would be found, not, like the "slothful servant," to have buried its talents, but to have exchanged them for base coinage.

But those of Mr. Roosevelt's way of thinking can see few mistakes and much success in the history of their country. "That pharisaical self-righteousness," which Professor von Holtz asserts to be "one of the most characteristic traits of the political thought of the masses of the American people,"* perhaps accounts for his inability to see but the white side of the shield.

**Constitutional History of the United States*, Vol. I., p. 34.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE FACTS.

IN a search for the facts of the American Revolution, it would avail little to consult the works of American historians, and almost as little those of British writers. All modern British historians, save one,* in the main, have been content to accept, without question, the American version of that contest; some, indeed, have bettered the instruction, and claimed greater forbearance for the revolting colonists than their own writers have claimed for them.

An example of this occurs in Green's history. This distinguished and highly popular historian—among other inaccurate and contradictory statements regarding the motives and acts of the revolutionists—asserts that the destruction of the tea by an organized mob at Boston (which he calls "a trivial riot") was "deplored" by the "leading statesmen" of the revolting colonies.† No clearer proof than this is needed to show that the distinguished historian, before making his dogmatic assertion, either had not taken the trouble to consult the most widely circulated writings of the men for whose opinions he assumed to vouch, or that he deliberately distorted them. For, with one or two unimportant exceptions, of men who thought it impolitic to express their true thoughts, and, of course, excepting the Loyalists, all the "leading statesmen" of the colonies not only approved of the outrage, but expressed themselves as greatly

*Mr. Lecky, who, nevertheless, has made some mistakes of fact and drawn some erroneous conclusions.

†*History of the English People.*

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

rejoicing in its accomplishment. John Adams declared that it was "the most magnificent movement of all," "the grandest event which has ever yet happened since the controversy with Britain opened. The sublimity of it charms me."^{*} Similar sentiments were expressed by the "leading statesmen" of the colonies from Savannah to Falmouth, so that it was, at the time, truthfully said that "nothing which has been ever done has been more universally approved, applauded and admired."[†] More than this, not only was the outrage approved by the "leading statesmen" of the revolting colonies, but the leader of all these leading statesmen, the chief organizer of that revolt, Samuel Adams himself, not only approved it, but planned it and directed it.

These facts have never been denied by American writers, yet in the face of them, influenced by motives which may be guessed, Mr. Green has gone out of his way deliberately to falsify the facts, to the advantage of the revolting colonists, in a matter which is most important to the merits of the case of the Revolution.

Few modern British historians give trustworthy accounts of the American Revolution, and all give inadequate ones. Mr. Lecky, it is true, has been at pains to seek the truth, but even he has lagged on the way. Several of his utterances, among them his speculation as to whether or not Lord Chatham could have brought back the revolted colonies to the Empire "at the last moment,"[‡] seem to indicate that he has not grasped the true meaning of the Revolutionary movement.

Not in the pages of popular histories, either British or American, may the truth be found. It must be sought in the utterances of the chief actors and organizers of the Revolution, as contained in their letters, diaries and other documents, either published or in manuscript, distributed in profuse abundance in the libraries of the cities of the Eastern States. With these documents to

*John Adams' *Works*, Vol. II., p. 323; Vol. IX., p. 333.

†*Ibid.*, Vol. IX., p. 335.

THE FACTS

aid us, if we ask why the British colonies rose in rebellion, and by what means they gained their independence, the answer is definite and clear.

The colonies rose in rebellion, not because of intolerable grievances imposed upon them by the Imperial Government, or because of any grievance that could not, or would not, have been redressed within the Empire; not because their inhabitants, as a body—even a large majority of them, or the most reputable and law-abiding among them—desired to sever their relations with the mother country; but because of the ambition and desire to rule of certain groups of men scattered throughout the provinces, though mostly concentrated in Massachusetts and Virginia. These men, by skilful intrigue, and without scruple, taking advantage of grievances such as have ever existed in governments, raised a cry of present oppression and slavery to come, and, by these means, formed a party of Disunion—or, as it is expressed by Mr. Roosevelt, they “goaded the rank and file into line”—with intent, with their help, to separate the colonies from the mother country, either by political manœuvring, or, failing that, by force of arms. These “Revolutionary leaders,” with their followers—more or less honest in their convictions, but always swayed by their imperious chiefs—at the period of their greatest strength certainly did not number more than two-thirds of the inhabitants of the thirteen colonies, as was affirmed by two of their most distinguished chiefs;² or, what is more likely, constituted only a minority of them, as asserted by every prominent Loyalist in America. Most American writers have denied or ignored this fact, but a few of modern days have admitted it, among them Professor Tyler, who declares that if the Loyalists “were not actually a majority,” they were “a huge minority,” an “immense and very conscientious minority,” a “vast section of American society.”†

Pap.

**Gouverneur Morris*, p. 49.

†*Literary History of the American Revolution*, Vol. I., pp. 3, 300, 304.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

The American Revolution was far from being "a revolt of a whole people."

The colonies gained their independence, not because their quarrel was just, not because of the exalted patriotism, unselfishness, superior virtue and fidelity to principle of the Revolutionary leaders, or of the "masses" that adhered to them; not by the superior prowess of their "insurgent husbandmen," but because of the astuteness, energy and persistence in the face of all obstacles, political and ethical, of their leaders; by the aid of large numbers of aliens in the ranks of their armies and on the decks of their warships; the French military forces in their own territory, the armies of France and Spain in Europe and Florida; the navies of France, Spain and Holland in European and American waters; the hostile and menacing action of the federated powers of Northern Europe, together with the passive but effective aid of the people of Ireland, marshalled in warlike and threatening array; the active aid of the powerful Whig chiefs in England, who, with their vast and influential following, paralyzed the action of the ministry; and—most effective aid of all—the imbecility of the ministry itself.³

"Was there ever a war," said Mr. Madison, in the Virginia Convention, "in which the British nation stood opposed to so many nations? All the belligerent nations of Europe, with nearly one-half of the British Empire, were united against it."^{*}

"The efforts of the Americans in throwing off the English yoke have been considerably exaggerated," wrote a distinguished French publicist of the last century. "Separated from their enemies by three thousand miles of ocean, and backed by a powerful ally, the success of the United States may be more justly attributed to their geographical position than to the valor of their armies or the patriotism of their citizens."[†]

De Tocqueville is right. Except in the matter of the

*Elliott's *Debates*, Vol. III., p. 309.

†De Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Part I., Book I., Chap. VIII.

skilful manœuvring of the Disunion chiefs that brought about armed hostilities and procured them allies, the American revolting colonists played but a minor part in the achievement of their independence.

But was the British Government justified in denying to the colonies "the right of self-government," even though it were not demanded by the unanimous voice of their citizens, or by that of a large majority of them? Apparently Mr. Roosevelt believes that it was not. "Whether their yoke bore heavily or lightly, whether it galled or not, mattered little; it was enough that it was a yoke to warrant a proud, free people in throwing it off,"* he writes.

But surely the distinguished writer will admit that if, as his words seem to suggest, the yoke of England upon the colonies was a light one, and galled not at all, at least it ill became a proud, free people so to falsify the facts as to fill the world with clamorous complaints of intolerable and inhuman tyranny suffered at her hands, or to persecute and slay such of their fellow-citizens as were honest enough to refuse to view the matter in so false a light; in short, to combine false pretences and cruelty with rebellion.

And who were these "proud, free people"? Here Mr. Roosevelt appears to assume as true that gigantic lie that has done so much to confuse the facts of the American Revolution, and to make out a case for its organizers; that lie that started into growth at the period of the agitation of the Disunionists, and is seemingly endowed with perennial life; which has deceived so many distinguished British and American writers: the pretence that the colonists were "of one mind" in opposing the Home Government and in desiring independence. For it is difficult to believe that, for the single reason that they were "proud and free," Mr. Roosevelt would justify *a part* of the community in throwing off the authority of a Government whose rule was light, and forcing upon

**Gouverneur Morris*, p. 6.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

the other part another rule that was abhorrent to them, at the expense of a long and bloody war.

In support of the action of the British Government in its refusal to let the colonies go in peace, it may not be out of place to cite the words of one who, without a thought of giving such support, nevertheless has furnished a powerful argument in its favor.

ad. "Suppose," wrote John Stuart Mill, "that the mere will to separate were, in this case, or in any case, a sufficient ground for separation, I beg to be informed whose will? The will of any knot of men who, by fair means or foul, by usurpation, terrorism or fraud, have got the reins of government into their hands? If the inmates of Parkhurst Prison were to get possession of the Isle of Wight, occupy its military positions, enlist one part of its inhabitants in their own ranks, set the remainder of them to work in chain-gangs, and declare themselves independent, ought their recognition by the British Government to be an immediate consequence? Before admitting the authority of any persons as organs of the will of the people to dispose of the whole political existence of a country, I ask to see whether their credentials are from the whole, or only a part."*

Now, when Mr. Mill wrote these words nothing was farther from his intent than to apply them to the acts of the organizers of the American Revolution. Yet the facts and inferences they contain apply with far greater force to them than they do to those to whom he intended them to apply—to whom, in fact, they do not apply at all.⁴ Disregarding the scarcely courteous comparison to escaped convicts, the words of Mr. Mill summarize with admirable exactitude, though without intention, the position and actions of the Disunion chiefs. By means very like those recited by Mr. Mill, that "knot of men" got the reins of the governments of the several provinces into their hands, enlisted part of the inhabitants in their

*In the article in *Fraser's Magazine* before referred to in these notes.

THE FACTS

own ranks and set others (the Loyalists) to work in chain-gangs, and worse; and, declaring themselves independent, disposed of the whole political existence of all of them.

Therefore, in the words of Mr. Mill, I ask, "Whose will took the colonies out of the Empire?" The answer is evident: the will of the Disunion chiefs, and no other. Proceeding farther to Mr. Mill's suggested conclusion, it follows that the British Government should not have recognized the independence of the revolting colonies so long as it had the ability to retain them in the Empire. In *this* conclusion Mr. Mill would not have acquiesced, for the reason that he was deceived as to the premises. Had he understood them, to be consistent he must have done so.

The British colonies in America were made independent by a body of men who conspired to separate them from the Empire—actually, if not in name. As in all cases where men combine for the accomplishment of a purpose, the incentive to action varied in each. Some—as in the case of Samuel Adams, whom Governor Hutchinson truthfully styled "malignant"—were influenced by sentiments of revenge for fancied or pretended injuries;⁵ others—as in the case of his cousin and namesake—from motives of self-interest, and a belief that the colonies would never prosper as they should while they were attached by leading-strings to the mother country. But all alike were influenced by an ambition to rule. Though there had never been a time in the history of the colonies when there had not been among their inhabitants a number of discontented men who desired nothing more than their severance from Great Britain, yet, at the time of the Peace of Paris, prior to which they could not hope for a realization of that desire, they were neither so numerous nor so well organized as to be able to carry their plans to a successful issue. Therefore, the Disunion leaders set themselves to the task of organizing them into a well regulated party and to gather recruits; or, again, in the words of Mr.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Roosevelt, "to shape new political conditions, and then to reconcile our people to them."*

Professor Tyler asserts that the "several stages" of the American Revolution "from beginning to end unfolded themselves and succeeded one another with something of the logical sequence, the proportion and the unity, of a well-ordered plot."† This is not strange, for it was a well-ordered plot, and the Disunion chiefs were the plotters. They were aided, in the colonies, not alone by men who, like themselves, "panted after independence,"‡ but by many who affiliated with them in the mistaken belief that their sole object was the reform of the government of the colonies *within* the Empire, and not to take them out of it. It was such as these that, when they were persecuted and imprisoned by those whom they had assisted, because they refused to subscribe to doctrines that had ever been abhorrent to them, complained:

"For freedom, indeed, we supposed we were fighting,
But this kind of freedom's not very inviting."§

The Disunion chiefs were aided in England by those who were so unscrupulous as to use the Revolutionary agitation in America as political capital at home. Of these, some were as much deceived as were their transatlantic coadjutors as to the true intent of the Disunionists; others, who knew or suspected it, were careless of the result, thus making their patriotism subordinate to their political ambition or their love of popularity. Doubtless there were a few who sincerely believed that the maintenance of the free institutions of Great Britain could be assured only by the independence of the colonies. Naturally these men were not only willing but eager for the consummation of that independence.

**Gouverneur Morris*, p. 51.

†*Literary History of the American Revolution*, Vol. I., p. 31.

‡*Daniel Leonard, Massachusetts Letters*.

§*The Loyal Verses of Stansbury and Odell*, p. 17.

THE FACTS

The grievances of which the Disunion leaders complained, and of which they made effective use in their propaganda, were such as inevitably must have arisen under any administration but one prepared to acquiesce in the virtual separation of the colonies from the mother country. The most oppressive of these grievances were the direct result—doubtless foreseen by them—of the action of the Disunion leaders. That they could have been redressed within the Empire is certain; that they would have been so redressed, had the opposition of the colonists been confined to constitutional methods, is equally certain. That these facts were known, feared and guarded against by the Disunion leaders by means of exciting their followers to unconstitutional demands and acts of insurrection, is no less certain than either.

In either of two contingencies, the Disunion leaders might have severed the colonies from the Empire and established their independence by diplomatic means alone. Had the Chatham or Rockingham ministries remained in office for as long a period as did that of Lord North, it is probable that the Disunionists would have been able so to strengthen their position as to force the Parliament to renounce all control over them; in which event the transition to actual independence would have been rapid and easy. Again, if nearly all or a very large majority of the colonists had affiliated with the Disunion party, and declared for independence, even such a ministry as that of Lord North would have been little inclined to proceed against them by force of arms. In such a contingency, it is likely that any ministry would have endeavored to allay the disturbances by a series of concessions, by these means as effectually bringing about the independence of the colonies as by the method, or want of method, that was adopted.

The eight years' war, by means of which the colonists did gain their independence, on their part was neither a just nor a necessary war. It was not just or necessary, because, without it, the freedom and happiness of the colonists would not have been impaired or imperilled;

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

and those upon whom the war was made had not designed to impair or imperil them. Professor Tyler will not admit this, and he supports his assertion that the colonists were justified in making war upon the British Government, after the manner of Washington and Webster. That is, he admits that there was no "tyranny inflicted" upon the colonists, but only "tyranny anticipated;" that there were no "real evils," but only "ideal evils." But, he argues, "the people" (meaning, no doubt, the Disunion chiefs) "produced the Revolution, not because they were as yet actual sufferers, but because they were good logicians and were able to prove that, without resistance, they or their children would some day become actual sufferers."* But this they never proved, and the logic of events has shown the falsity of the pretence. The claim of necessity for the war on the part of the colonists can be founded only on the assumption that independence was essential to their freedom and happiness, and of the reasonableness of this assumption there is no proof either.

On the part of the British Government the war was both just and necessary—at least, so far as any war can be said to be just or necessary. It was just, because, not only was it forced upon that Government, but because it was fought in the interests, not only of the people of Great Britain, but in that of the colonists who were loyal to the Empire—a large number of law-abiding citizens, who had as much "inherent right" to oppose and resist the "shaping of new political conditions" in their governments by a revolutionary cabal as had their "proud, free" compatriots to advocate it, intrigue for it and fight for it. These loyal subjects had been warred upon by their rebellious fellow-colonists, for no fault of theirs, and they had called upon the supreme Government for protection. If it had not afforded it, it would have failed in its duty. Affording it, it was obliged to take up the gage of battle thrown down by those who

**Literary History of the American Revolution*, Vol. I., p. 8.

THE FACTS

had defied its authority. On the part of the British Government the war was a necessary one. Without it, its integrity could not have been maintained, and it is the privilege of a government, no less than that of an individual, to preserve its existence intact. It is its duty to do so, for it is accountable for its stewardship to every one of the governed.

But though thus supported by equity and necessity on the part of the British, the war against the revolting colonists was a half-hearted one, little enthusiasm or determination being shown by the officers either of the army or the navy, and none at all by the men-at-arms. The sole exception to this lack of earnestness and energy existed among the crews of the privateers, who found an incentive to action and daring in the opportunity to prey on the rich commerce of France and Spain. But the enthusiasm of these men had its source, not in patriotism, but in the lust of gain.

That the colonists, as a people, were not animated by the highest form of patriotism, or even by that more restricted form of patriotism which inspires the impulse to defend one's native soil, has been sufficiently demonstrated, and that they were in no wise unanimous in sentiment has also been shown, but an illustration of these facts, startling in the conviction that it brings, may be given: At the period of the Revolution, the free white inhabitants of the thirteen colonies numbered, probably, two millions and a quarter, ~~certainly over~~ two millions. With this number to draw from, reinforced by alien volunteers, and aided by conscription, the Revolutionary commanders with difficulty kept in the field an army of thirty thousand men. In another and later war for independence, undertaken by a people who numbered less than one-tenth of the American colonists, with no difficulty at all was kept in the field an army of twice that number.* That the inability of the American colonists to keep a larger army in the field was not owing

*The South African republics.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

to a dearth of arms or other munitions of war is shown by the fact that throughout the war there was never any difficulty in arming recruits; and with a population of three-quarters of a million slaves, and at least as many able-bodied free men, engaged in agriculture and manufactures, there should have been no dearth of supplies for the Revolutionary commissariat. It is true that much of these supplies never reached that commissariat, but this was owing either to the lack of patriotism on the part of the farmers who raised them—they preferring British gold to Revolutionary promises—or else to the fact that they were disaffected to the Revolutionary cause. All have heard of the miseries of Valley Forge. But these miseries were not caused by any act of the British commander, who manifested not the slightest disposition to trouble those who were there intrenched. It was caused by the action, or inaction, of the colonial farmers, who, with abundant harvests in store, refused to supply their compatriots with the necessities of life.⁶

In the matter of patriotic effort for independence, from the British colonists in America to the Boers of South Africa is a long step.

But, intimates Mr. Roosevelt, not only was England wrong in her dealings with the revolting colonists in the days of the Revolution, but she has been wrong ever since in her dealings with the Great Republic and its citizens. Her past conduct, he asserts, "certainly offers much excuse for" that "unreasonable and virulent anti-English feeling . . . which is so strong in many parts of our country."*

It is, perhaps, unfortunate that Mr. Roosevelt has not condescended to give to his uninformed readers the particulars of this "past conduct of England" which, in his opinion, excuses, if it does not justify, the unreasoning and virulent feeling against her that is cherished by his countrymen. Because, without this information, one can but seek for them in the historic records, and the

**Gouverneur Morris*, pp. 228, 229.

THE FACTS

result of the search does not yield a very striking confirmation of Mr. Roosevelt's assertion.

In these records, extending through the life of the Great Republic, may be found many attempts at conciliation, accompanied by valuable concessions, made by the British Government to the United States; and frequent demonstrations of an apparently sincere disposition to friendship with their citizens made by the people of Great Britain. In return for these demonstrations, on the part of the United States, may be found an abiding determination to gain every possible advantage for themselves at the expense of Great Britain, together with a willingness to accept favors from her without requital—on the part of the American people, a constant disposition to meet the friendly advances of their British cousins with unresponsiveness, not to say churlishness, and to impute to their every act and utterance motives of disguised hostility to themselves.

At the very outset of the relations of Great Britain and the United States as sovereign powers is found a manifestation of these dispositions. In the treaty of peace which gave them independence, Great Britain presented to the United States, virtually as a free gift, a vast extent of rich and fertile territory, comprising over four hundred thousand square miles of land—an empire in itself—not one foot of which had formed any part of the revolted colonies, and over which they had established no control by act of war.* That this was a gratuitous gift is plain, because France, their ally, without whose help they could not have obtained peace, gladly would have supported the British Government in restricting the United States to their original colonial limits. In giving them the privilege of the fisheries, too, Great Britain acted against the wishes of the French ministers.

Vergennes referred somewhat contemptuously to the "generosity" of the British ministers in making these concessions. "The English buy a peace rather than

*Territory now forming the States of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee and Alabama.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

make it. Their concessions . . . exceed all that I could have thought possible,"* he declared. And before that time Gerard had informed the Congress that his master, the King of France, would not prolong the war for a day to enable the United States to obtain any territory not included within their original boundaries.†

In return for these surely no inconsiderable benefits to the young republics, they refused to comply with the obligations they had imposed upon themselves in the treaty which granted them. Three years after its ratification, John Jay asserted that there had "not been a single day since it took effect in which it had not been violated in America."⁷ This refusal to perform a plain duty was continued for years, until, influenced by retaliatory measures adopted by the British Government, and urged thereto by Washington and the few who stood with him, the pledges given in the treaty were partially redeemed; wholly they could not be, for lapse of time had made their redemption impossible.

If ever there was a people who had reason for sincere reconciliation with a nation with whom they had been at war, surely it was the people of the United States. The British people had never been their enemies. A vast number of them, in defiance of their own rulers, and apparently in opposition to their own interests, had aided them in gaining their independence. As said Lord Chatham, they had "glowed with a congenial flame." Even the rulers themselves, by their refusal to take severe measures of suppression, had helped to bring about that consummation; and when the late colonies had begun their career as sovereign states, these rulers had endowed them with territory on land and sea.

In return for these obligations, the name of Englishman was made a byword and a reproach among the citizens of the federated States. The new generation—even the progeny of the Loyalists—were taught to

*Vergennes to Rayneval, December 4, 1782: *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, Vol. VI., p. 107.

†See Circourt's *Histoire*, etc., Vol. III., p. 264.

THE FACTS

believe that his crime had been too great for pardon, and that to hate him was a virtue. This antagonism increased rather than diminished, and was shared by the educated as well as the ignorant. So that, a decade after the establishment of independence, American statesmen, declaiming in their halls of congress, stigmatized as a traitor to his country one of their colleagues because he had not been "ardent enough in his hatred to Great Britain," and declared that "that nation must be extirpated," for "the world ought to rejoice if Britain were sunk in the sea."⁸

Politicians and the people, the governors and the governed, joined in a general clamor against the efforts of Washington to inaugurate amicable relations with Great Britain; and when, at length, a treaty of amity and commerce with that nation was drafted, the journals teemed with denunciations of its provisions before a word of its contents was known to those who condemned them. As said Fisher Ames, "The alarm spread faster than the publication. There were more critics than readers;" so fearful were the people of having bound themselves to do common justice to that hated nation.

When the Government of the younger Pitt was forced into a war with France, in spite of his efforts to avoid it, the first evidence of that war was greeted by the people of the United States with "peals of exultation."⁹ The few that ventured to dissent from this general chorus of approbation were held up to their fellow-citizens as fit objects for their detestation.¹⁰

This war gave opportunity to the American people to manifest their hostility to Great Britain in ways more forcible than words. Since the Dark Ages, there seldom have been seen such open and flagrant violations of the obligations of a neutral nation towards a belligerent as were manifested by the state officials and people of the United States towards Great Britain during the early part of that war. Washington did his utmost to put a stop to these outrageous violations of the laws of nations, but, in spite of proclamations, the state authorities,

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

instead of suppressing, abetted them. So it happened that for many days citizens of the United States continued to wage piratical warfare upon the commerce of a friendly nation without serious impediment,¹¹ some of them laying the foundation of large fortunes by means of these sea robberies from British merchants.

As the war progressed, the merchants and shipowners of the United States became the ocean carriers for the commerce of the French republic,¹² thereby constituting their country the ally of France. To fill the decks of these vessels, British seamen, by promise of high wages, were enticed to leave their ships and sail under the flag of the United States, to the great injury of British commerce. Nor was this the worst injury done to Great Britain, for the men of her warships were encouraged and assisted to desert and enlist on American vessels, in such large numbers as seriously to endanger the efficiency of her navy. These conditions became so intolerable as to provoke retaliation from British commanders, which, though disavowed by the British Government, was used with effect further to inflame the passions of the American people against Great Britain.

Then, as at all times during the history of the United States, Great Britain did not want for generous champions among the American people. There were those, even then, who dared to speak for justice to the hated enemy. Among them was the Reverend John Sylvester Gardiner, rector of Trinity Church, Boston, a member of one of the oldest and most honorable families of New England.

"Though submissive and even servile to France," wrote this gentleman, "to Great Britain we are eager to display our hatred and hurl our defiance. . . . Every petty dispute which may happen between American captains and a British officer is magnified into a national insult. The land of our fathers, whence is derived the best blood of the nation, the country to which we are chiefly indebted for our laws and knowledge, is stigmatized as a nest of pirates, plunderers

THE FACTS

and assassins. We entice away her seamen, the very sinews of her power; we refuse to restore them on application; we issue hostile proclamations; we interdict her ships of war from the common rights of hospitality; we pass non-importation acts; we lay embargoes; we refuse to ratify a treaty in which she has made great concessions to us; we dismiss her envoy of peace, who came purposely to apologize for an act unauthorized by her Government; we commit every act of hostility against her in proportion to our means and station. Observe the conduct of the two nations: France robs us, and we love her; Britain courts us, and we hate her.”*

After years of indecision and a continuance of this state of veiled warfare against Great Britain, advantage was taken of her condition—without an ally,¹³ and threatened with invasion by the greatest military organization of modern days, the “Army of Twenty Nations,” commanded by the ever-victorious Captain—at a time when she was battling for her very existence as an independent realm,¹⁴ to make open war upon her.

In spite of specious pretences, the sole object of that war was the capture of Canada, as the records abundantly prove. The possession of that country had been the passionate desire of the Disunion chiefs, from the day when they first looked forward to independence, and when they were obliged to sign a treaty of peace which did not provide for its cession they were deeply disappointed. In 1778, John Adams declared: “As long as Great Britain shall have Canada, . . . so long will Great Britain be the enemy of the United States.” “As long as she shall hold a foot of ground in America she shall continue our enemy.” Two years later, in a letter to a French official, the same gentleman made a similar statement, and added: “Whereas France, having renounced all territorial jurisdiction in America, will have no room for controversy.” Years later, while

*“Fast Day Sermon:” *Cyclopedia of American Literature*, Vol. I., p. 535.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

the second war against Great Britain was in progress, John Adams wrote: "The French had no territories accessible to our land forces, to tempt us with prospects of conquest."^{*}

So the failure of 1783 was to be remedied in 1812. And the remedy was easy, for the conquest of Canada was "a mere matter of marching," and its cession was to be a *sine qua non* for the resumption of peace with Great Britain.¹⁵

So began the War of 1812—but that is another myth.

As was natural, the failure of the attempt against Canada, the temporary loss of territory, and the loss of the fishing privileges, which were the results of the war, did not diminish the bitter sentiments cherished by the American people against Great Britain and her people. A generation after the close of that war these sentiments were so prominently in evidence as to cause De Tocqueville, then on a visit to the United States, to declare that: "*Il est impossible d'imaginer une haine plus venimeuse que celle des Américaines contre les Anglais.*"[†]

The designs against Canada were still cherished by Americans, and several attempts to foment a rebellion in that country were made, and at least one armed invasion of its territory. In 1837, several hundreds of the inhabitants of New York, armed with cannon taken from the public stores, invaded Canada and attacked one of its settlements. The cannon, as said Lord Ashburton, "were actually mounted on Navy Island, and were used to fire within easy range upon the unoffending inhabitants of the opposite shore;" while "a militia regiment stationed on the neighboring American island looked on without any attempt at interference, while shots were fired from the American island itself." "This important

*John Adams to Samuel Adams, July 28, 1778; to Ralph Izard, September 25, 1778; to Genet, May 17, 1780; to James Lloyd, February 6, 1815: *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, Vol. II., pp. 667, 743; Vol. III., p. 687. John Adams' *Works*, Vol. X., p. 115.

†De Tocqueville, *De la Democratie en Amerique*.

THE FACTS

fact," added Lord Ashburton, "stands on the best American authority, being stated in a letter to Mr. Forsyth, on the 6th of February, 1838, of Mr. Benton, Attorney of the United States."

As the United States Government refused to put a stop to these acts of war upon a friendly nation, the Canadian authorities took the matter into their own hands, and, by destroying the vessel of the invaders, ended the trouble for that time. In doing so, they, in turn, invaded the territory of the United States; but this act not only was approved by the British Government, but was acknowledged to be justifiable by no less a person than Daniel Webster, who, in his defence of the Treaty of Washington, said of the American invaders: "The persons engaged in that vessel were, it is to be remembered, violating the laws of their own country, as well as the laws of nations; some of them suffered for that offence, and I wish all had suffered."

That the "venomous hate" of all things English, spoken of by De Tocqueville, was deliberately taught to American youth, is testified to by many, among them by Henry Ward Beecher.¹⁶ That it was cherished by American statesmen and people for more than half a century after De Tocqueville wrote, any one who will take the trouble to glance over the files of American journals published during that period may satisfy himself. That the feeling is not entirely extinct may be discovered by a perusal of those of the present day. One of the late, but by no means the latest, examples of this may be found in an article published some ten years ago in an American newspaper of wide circulation. The writer advocated a war with Great Britain, and as reasons therefor made these statements:

"No nation on earth ever offered the indignities to our people that England has offered. Commencing back in colonial days and coming down to the present time, whatever respectful treatment this nation ever received from England was forced by cannon and bayonet. In our short history our people have twice whipped that

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

country into civility. She has twice met us as an open foe and been beaten, and since that she has attempted the methods of the assassin, but was foiled. . . . She is not our mother, but is our sworn and hereditary foe. *There is eternal enmity and hatred between England and this country.* Let there be talk of war with the German Empire, and millions of hands would go up in protest; let there be talk of war with France, and millions of voices would be raised against it; . . . but at any suggestion of a war with England every American girths his belt a little tighter, holds himself erect and declares he is ready. *No orator ever stood before an American audience and vigorously twisted the tail of the British lion without being greeted with tumultuous applause. It is there you find the sentiment of seventy million American citizens.* . . . We are no kin, and if war comes our people will go into it without any embarrassing sentiment about our fratricidal contest. We have fought twice without compunctions on this score, and we can do it again."

I have quoted from this article—one among scores of a like character—because it is typical of the beliefs and sentiments of the “average” American, especially those passages which I have italicized. And it should be remembered that it is this average American who sways the policy of the United States in all things where Great Britain is concerned.

In the meantime it may be well to inquire of what crimes the British Government or people have been guilty to justify such beliefs and sentiments.

There have been frequent disputes between Great Britain and the United States on questions of boundaries and fishing privileges, resulting in almost as frequent concessions on the part of the former; so that their final settlements have been well characterized by a British statesman as “capitulations” on the part of his Government. That of the Alaskan boundary at present completes the list, but he would be of a sanguine temperament who should believe it completed for all time.

THE FACTS

It is true that, in the case of one of these disputes, Great Britain was awarded damages, to be paid by the United States;* but it is also true that these damages were withheld for a number of years, upon no reasonable pretence, until the latter country became engaged in a war; when, feeling the need of the sympathy and aid of Great Britain, the award was paid with a haste as unseemly as was the delay.

It is also true that another of these disputes resulted in the United States ousting Great Britain from but half the territory claimed and occupied by her on the Pacific Coast; whereas they had threatened to oust her from the whole. But in this instance the claims of the United States were so manifestly unfounded and absurd as to arouse the spirit of opposition even in the most complacent of British ministries. Because of the "blustering announcement" of President Polk, to surrender at their demand every foot of territory on that coast—territory to which she had established a right by discovery, while the claimants were still her colonies, and to which her title had been acknowledged by the two powers that alone had a shadow of claim to it—would have made Great Britain a subject for the contempt of nations; yet that is what the United States insisted that she must do. But this could hardly be, even though distinguished American statesmen had protested that the claim of their country would never be abandoned, and that they would never yield an inch of it; even though one of them had proved, on the authority of the Book of Genesis,¹⁷ that the right, title and interest in and to the whole of it was vested in the United States; even though they had announced, in alliterative phrase, that they would do battle for it.[†]

It is true, too, that the Venezuela boundary dispute resulted in a fiasco for the claimants, since they were awarded about one hundred square miles of territory in

*The Behring Sea Award, the payment of which was delayed until the opening of the Spanish-American War.

†The famous political battle-cry of "Fifty-four Forty or Fight."

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

satisfaction of their claim of sixty thousand, and since they could have obtained a far larger amount of territory had they accepted the offer of the British Government. But then it was not the United States that was the claimant. The result of the Venezuelan dispute, in reality, was as much a "capitulation" on the part of the British Government as were the results of the others. When Lord Salisbury met what a great New York weekly aptly called the "insulting defiance" of President Cleveland with "extraordinary meekness," and submitted to the dictation of a foreign power in a matter in which Great Britain and the other party in dispute alone were concerned, he capitulated more abjectly than his predecessors had done, and, like the foolish dog in the fable, for the shadow of American friendship dropped the meat of Imperial prestige.

We have seen how the early attempts at reconciliation and cordiality made by the British Government were reciprocated by Americans. Did these attempts end with that failure? Apparently they did not; it would seem that other attempts were made, with similar results.

When, in 1823, George Canning came to the rescue of Mr. Monroe's administration, which by a rash, if somewhat vague, defiance of the powers of Europe had placed the United States in a position that they could not maintain, and from which they could not recede without humiliation—facts virtually admitted by Mr. Calhoun, then Secretary of War—it might be supposed that this timely support would have aroused in the minds of Americans something like sentiments of gratitude towards the British Government; but though the obligation was grudgingly acknowledged at the time, it was soon forgotten, and the succeeding generations of Americans were taught to regard the "Monroe Doctrine" as a weapon forged by American statesmen for the coercion and humiliation of Great Britain, a menace to the nation without whose aid it must have rusted in the scabbard.¹⁸

The question of the right of search of American vessels in time of war, asserted by Great Britain, and

THE FACTS

declared by American writers to have been the cause of the War of 1812, is universally asserted by them to have been "settled once for all" by that war. But it was not settled by that war. It was settled more than forty years after that war by the voluntary concession of the British Government; which concession was characterized by Mr. Dallas, in a speech delivered by him on the 4th of July, 1858, as being made "with a degree of noble candor on the part of the British Government which is worthy of every acknowledgment on our part."

But few and curt have been the acknowledgments for favors done by the British Government and people to those of the United States. If these favors have not been numerous, or of very great political importance, still they have been opportunely rendered and effective, and certainly were deserving of a better return than an increase of ill-feeling towards the doers, which, in fact, has been generally the result. A characteristic instance is that of the Klondyke goldfields. It will be remembered, when these great gold discoveries were made, how American adventurers flocked to that territory to gather the spoils. At that time, when thousands of American citizens were being enriched by the generous provisions of the Canadian laws, which—as in the case of all territory under British rule—gave to aliens the same mining privileges as enjoyed by its own citizens; at that time the journals of the United States were filled with complaints and threats against the governments and officials of Canada and Great Britain because Americans were not permitted to dictate to the Canadian authorities how their customs and police regulations should be administered. "Appeals to Washington" and other like absurdities were advocated. And this while, by the laws of the United States, no Canadian or other British subject was permitted to glean a grain of ore from the extensive mining fields of the United States.

To such a pitch of almost incredibly absurd pretension had the complacence of British ministries and people brought the people of the United States.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

The last of these instances may be well remembered. It is but a few years ago when, at the time the United States entered into their petty war with Spain, the attitude of the British Government made it plain that it would oppose a European combination to coerce them; thus, perhaps, for the second time relieving them from an *impasse*. Then, indeed, for a time, the press of the United States expressed deep gratitude for the favor conferred, and asseverated in the most earnest terms that it would never be forgotten by Americans. Then the remarkable and unprecedented spectacle was seen of the Banner of Britain, not defiled by the hands of a mob, but borne with honor in processions through the streets of cities of the United States.

At that time, a well-meaning but greatly mistaken gentleman, a general in the United States army, in an article advocating the establishment of close and friendly relations with Great Britain, asserted that: "The course of England generally in our war with Spain, the conduct of the British naval contingent at Manila, and the cordial treatment of Americans by Englishmen in all parts of the world, have at last turned the tide [of American vituperation of Great Britain], and now an international friendship, backed by the intelligence and best blood of both nations, bids fair to start down the new century in earnest approval of the sentiment that 'blood is thicker than water.' God speed the movement which tends to dispel forever the misunderstandings and bitterness of the olden days."

But it was quickly shown that the gallant gentleman did not thoroughly understand the dispositions of his countrymen. The war over, the aid of Britain no longer needed, what a sudden transformation was seen! Scarcely had the sound of the last gun ceased to reverberate from the heavens, when in the press and on the platform again were seen and heard the usual invectives against Great Britain and her people, intensified, indeed, by the interval of disuse. Their crimes against human rights were exploited in glaring headlines in the columns

THE FACTS

of the journals, and detailed from the lips of statesmen in the halls of legislation. The current of vituperation, temporarily deflected, had resumed its normal course. The "tide" again had turned back. Again Great Britain was "the sworn and hereditary foe" of the American Government and people.

At this time both countries were engaged in small wars: Great Britain in an effort to subdue the Boers of South Africa, who had made war upon her; the United States in an effort to subdue the Filipinos, upon whom *they* had made war, after entering their country ostensibly to aid them in gaining their independence. The attempt of Great Britain to preserve her supremacy in a country where she had been paramount for nearly a century, and to prevent the establishment there of an alien and inferior civilization, was characterized by the journals and statesmen of the United States as a gross and infamous invasion of the sacred rights of mankind.¹⁹ The attempt of the United States to establish their rule in a country in which they had never had a foothold was declared to be actuated by a benevolent desire for the good of humanity. The nation that justified rebellion on the ground that there could be no just government that was not based on the consent of the governed, was declared to be perfectly justified in forcing its rule upon a people, not one of whom had assented, or could be expected to assent, to it.

It is true that the one nation was a monarchy, and, therefore, necessarily in the wrong; the other a republic, and, therefore, necessarily in the right. This view of the matter was taken by a distinguished United States Senator,* who, when moving a resolution of sympathy with the Boers, doubtless in the hope of bringing about a combination of powers to coerce Great Britain, and thus repay the obligation which his country owed to her, among other remarks of a similar purport, said:

"The war between monarchy and republicanism began

*Senator Mason.

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

in earnest on July the Fourth, 1776, and no treaty of peace has ever been concluded, nor ever will be, until the question is settled, and settled right."

That is to say, by the destruction of all governments of the monarchical form, especially that of Great Britain, the "professed bully" *par excellence*.

About the same time, another distinguished Senator also paid his compliments to Great Britain, in part in the following terms:

"England was deliberately and wantonly forcing a quarrel upon President Kruger, on a trumped-up and baseless pretence, for the purpose of destroying the independence of the Transvaal republic. . . . Having been snubbed and kicked and cuffed by all the great powers of Europe, subjected to indignities to which she has submitted without a protest, England now makes an enormous military demonstration against an insignificant community, as a discredited slugger avenges himself for the insults of his equals by indiscriminate assaults upon cripples and women and children. . . . Whenever a weak or feeble power has anything that England wants, and refuses to surrender, that is of itself a *casus belli*, and the plunder, robbery and extortion that follow are always in the interests of civilization. In this consecrated name she built up the Indian Empire by a series of inconceivable barbarities. England is the bully and ruffian and coward among nations, and never fights her equals on equal terms. . . . Give her a cripple or a baby as an antagonist, and she is dauntless and undeniably. She bullied and insulted and domineered over this country till we thrashed her in two wars on land and sea. . . . Cleveland slapped her in the face in his Venezuelan message, and she accepted the insult."*

Wars may come and wars may go, but from the mouths of such Americans the stream of vituperation of Great Britain and all things British flows on forever.

*John J. Ingalls, for several terms Senator from the State of Kansas.

THE FACTS

With these examples of American sentiment, flaunted abroad to the sound of applause of delighted hearers, before his eyes, examples but three or four years old, is any one so sanguine and trusting as to believe that the virulent feeling so long cherished by Americans to Great Britain is now a thing of the past? Or that the oft-tried policy of concession and smooth language will tend to bring about that desideratum? One that does so has never studied American history, or has studied it to little purpose. The ashes of those fires of "venomous hatred" of England, noted more than half a century ago by the French publicist, still smoulder in the breasts of Americans, ready to be blazed forth in all the fury of invective at such times as, from malice or interested motives, one or more of their statesmen shall make it appear that they have cause for grievance against her.

One of the most remarkable facts connected with these hostile demonstrations is that the home-staying Briton seems to be incapable of crediting their existence. This is well illustrated by an incident that occurred during the Venezuelan flurry. At the particular time when the American journals were filled to the greatest extent with denunciations of Great Britain—the week of Christmas festivities—there was represented at Drury Lane Theatre a pantomime, during the performance of which a large American flag was displayed. Night after night the appearance of this banner was cheered to the echo by the English audience; while, on the other side of the ocean, throughout every State in the Union, audiences were assembling to cheer the speakers who were denouncing Great Britain as the greatest criminal among nations, and threatening her with punishment by the sword.

When, at length, the English people awoke to the fact that their American cousins actually were incensed to fury against them for something they were supposed to have done, still they were at a loss to understand. It was incomprehensible. It was as if a gentleman, pass-

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

ing the house of a neighbor with whom he supposed himself on the best of terms, had been suddenly assailed with a shower of brickbats and rotten eggs flung by the family of his supposed friend.

What guarantee is there against a renewal of such demonstrations of hatred should the interests or the prejudices of Americans furnish the incentive? Absolutely none! The prejudice against Great Britain and the British, more or less dormant in the bosom of every American, will be aroused to activity upon the appearance of the slightest provocation, or fancied provocation. This condition must continue until the minds of Americans are freed from the false teachings of their historians.

Mr. Roosevelt believes that the British Government and people acted unfairly towards the United States "in the days of the Civil War." Then, as well as before, he declares, "the ruling classes of England were bitterly antagonistic to our nation."²⁰

Without debating the question as to what constituted "our nation" in the days of the Civil War, one thing is certain, as Mr. Roosevelt very well knows: That the ruling classes of England in those days refused to enter into a combination of European powers in favor of the Southern Confederacy, and, by that refusal, made such a combination impossible. Had they done otherwise, the history of the nations of the North American continent would have been changed, and Mr. Roosevelt to-day would be a citizen of a commonwealth less great and influential than that of which he is now the chief. Let us note what is said upon this subject by a statesman as honest, and at least as well informed in the premises, as is Mr. Roosevelt.

At the beginning of the war between the States, Mr. Carl Schurtz was sent by the Washington Government on a mission to Spain. While in Europe, Mr. Schurtz visited the capitals of the principal powers, and became well informed as to the policy of their rulers. In his recently published *Reminiscences*, he writes: "Louis

THE FACTS

Napoleon . . . was anxious to obtain the co-operation of Great Britain. . . . He sought that co-operation with great solicitude. With England, therefore, the decision rested. . . . If public opinion in England distinctly demanded the recognition of the Southern Confederacy, and active interference in its behalf, those things would certainly come. If public opinion distinctly forbade them, they would certainly not come." Later in the same article, Mr. Schurtz adds that his belief at the time was that if the current of public opinion in England were started in favor of the United States, "the matter was decided, for the French Emperor would not venture upon the risky task of actively interfering with our home concerns without Great Britain's consent and support."

The reason that this current of public opinion in England in favor of the United States did not run swifter and stronger was twofold: One the belief (justified by fact and authority) that the States of the North were overriding the political rights of those of the South, and taking advantage of their overwhelming power to wage against them a war of conquest; the other (justified by the utterances of every statesman, orator and writer of any prominence throughout the North) that, in the event of its success in subduing the Southern States, it was the intention of the United States Government to preserve therein the institution of slavery. As to the former, it could not but be a matter for amazement to Englishmen to see a people, who for a century had been frantically proclaiming the natural right of all communities to "govern themselves," and asserting that there could be no just government without the consent of the governed—to see this people suddenly assert a right to govern a vast community, homogeneous in sentiment, and utterly opposed to being so governed. Referring to this fact—in a dispatch to the Washington Government, which, as he says, has been styled by historians an "impressive warning"—Mr. Schurtz, with an amusing *naïveté*, remarked: "It is extremely diffi-

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

cult to make Europeans understand . . . why the principle by virtue of which a population sufficiently strong for establishing and maintaining an independent national existence possesses (*sic*) the right to have a government and institutions of its own choice, should not be recognized; . . . and all my constitutional arguments failed to convince them that such a right can be consistently denied, unless our cause was based upon principles of a higher nature."* Not a matter for great wonder, surely!

It was the lack of an assertion by the Government and people of the United States of these higher principles—principles recognizing the right of all men to personal freedom—that did more than all else to stem the current of public opinion in England that had begun to set in favor of the cause of the North. About this Mr. Schurtz has much to say. At the outset of his mission, he had been informed by Mr. Adams, then United States minister to the Court of St. James, that the strength of the influences hostile to the Northern States, existing in England, "depended in a great measure upon the widespread belief that the existence of slavery was not involved" in the struggle. Later, Mr. Schurtz himself became convinced that this belief "grievously impaired the moral strength" of the Northern cause in Europe. In his dispatch to the Washington Government, the "impressive warning" that has been referred to, Mr. Schurtz declared that "the attitude of Europe, as determined by popular sentiment, could not have been doubtful a single moment," if, as had there been assumed to be the case, the war had been a war against slavery. But when it was found that the acts of the United States Government "were marked by a strikingly scrupulous respect for the sanctity of slave property," there was "a feeling of surprise and disappointment." "It is my profound conviction," he continued, that as soon as the war becomes distinctly one for and against slavery, public

*For example, the emancipation of the slaves.

THE FACTS

opinion will be so strongly, so overwhelmingly in our favor that, in spite of commercial interests or secret spites, no European government will dare to place itself, by declaration or act, upon the side of an universally condemned institution." In commenting upon this statement, in his *Reminiscences*, Mr. Schurtz wrote: "The fundamental idea of my dispatch was . . . that an anti-slavery demonstration in the conduct of our Government . . . would start a current of public opinion in our favor strong enough to balk their [the Confederate agents'] schemes, especially in England."

Subsequent events proved this belief to be well founded. After the issuance of Mr. Lincoln's proclamation of emancipation, writes Mr. Schurtz: "The great masses of the English people, moved by their instinctive love of liberty, awoke to the true nature [?] of our struggle, and they had spokesmen of profound moral enthusiasm. 'Exeter Hall' thundered forth mighty appeals for the American North fighting against slavery. Scores and hundreds of public meetings were held all over Great Britain, giving emphasis to the great upheaval of conscience for human freedom. [It might have been noted that amidst these hundreds of meetings in England in favor of the North, there was not one called or held to advocate the cause of the South.] . . . From that time on the anti-slavery spirit of the British people was never silent, and it expressed itself on every occasion with such moral power as not only to exasperate, but to overawe, the most zealous friends of the Southern Confederacy."

Much of this is an old story to one who, like the writer of this treatise, at the beginning of the American Civil War, listened to the Northern orators, and read the utterances of the Northern statesmen, who, one and all, vehemently asserted that the sole object of that war was to restore "*the Union as it was*," that is, with its accompanying blot of slavery; and who personally was witness of the reluctance of the people of the North (even of those who were in arms to preserve the Union)

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

to acquiesce in its abolition. I am not, I believe, exaggerating the fact when I assert that in every State of the North, with the exception of those of New England, during at least the first year of the Civil War, the institution of slavery had proportionately as many advocates as it had in the South.²¹

There has been given the testimony of the emissaries of the North regarding the sentiments of the English people; what say those of the South?

All the world knows that James Mason and John Slidell were sent by the Southern Confederacy to England and France to induce those powers to acknowledge its independence, and that they were not successful in their mission. The reason—or, at least, the most important reason—why they were not successful in England has been summed up by Mr. Yancy, another envoy of the South, in a few words. “Gladstone we can manage,” he said, “but the feeling against slavery in England is so strong that no public man there dares extend a hand to help us.” And, said Mr. de Leon, still another Southern envoy, “Against a rooted prejudice and pre-conceived opinion,” which the Confederacy had to contend with in England, “reason and argument are powerless.” And Mason himself declared of “English gentlemen,” with whom he had conversed: “I have found it was in vain to combat their ‘sentiments.’ The so-called anti-slavery feeling seems to have become with them a ‘sentiment’ akin to patriotism.” Were there, then, none in Britain who would have welcomed the Southern Confederacy into the family of nations, if the stain of slavery were never to be removed from its escutcheon? No, not one. Mr. Dudley Mann asserted that even the “well-disposed friends” of the South had “committed themselves to the keeping up of an agitation against the cherished institution of the States composing our Confederacy.”*

Yet a host of American writers have asserted that the

*Extracts taken from John Bigelow's *The Confederate Diplomats*, published some years ago.

THE FACTS

sympathy of Englishmen was given to the slaveholders of the South in their efforts to perpetuate slavery against the determination of the North to suppress it.²² As to the belief of Englishmen that the Southern States had a legal right to secede, they were only following the doctrine laid down by the great apostle of democracy, Thomas Jefferson; and as to its expediency, they were but adopting the opinions of such puissant champions of the North as John Quincy Adams, James Russell Lowell, Wendell Phillips, and William Lloyd Garrison, who upheld the doctrine of secession almost to the eve of the breaking out of the war to suppress it.

And suppose that some of the "ruling" or other classes of Great Britain did favor the cause of the Southern Confederacy, what then? Mr. Roosevelt should not account that an offence undeserving of pardon, since several millions of his countrymen—including some of his own relatives, for whom, no doubt, he has great respect—did the same thing. Imitation is said to be the most sincere form of flattery, and in this the people of Great Britain were imitating those of the United States.

But, say her American critics, Great Britain acknowledged that she violated her neutrality, for the purpose of aiding the South, when she went into the Geneva Court as a party defendant and paid the penalty imposed upon her by the verdict of that court. It is true that Great Britain went into that court and accepted the sentence it imposed upon her, and, in so doing, virtually, in the eyes of the world, acknowledged the truth of the charge brought against her by the Washington Government that she "was actuated at that time by a conscious unfriendly purpose against the United States"—a charge as unfounded in fact as it was insulting in terms. The penalty that Great Britain consented to pay (and did pay) was for acts that had never been accounted criminal by any law, national or international, until they were made so by the court that imposed it. It has been claimed for the British statesmen of that time, that in

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

submitting to the ruling of the court they did a wise act, and established a precedent that would be of great value to their country at some future day. But a better explanation, it seems to me, is that governments, like society, have their "silly seasons;" and surely, if any government ever did have a silly season, it was the one that contained influential members who proposed to alienate colonies that were loyal to the Empire and that desired nothing so much as to remain attached to it. Of course, these men believed that such concessions would result in "a better understanding" with the United States, an *ignis fatuus* which has dazzled the eyes of several generations of English statesmen.

The result was far otherwise; for though, before the case was submitted to the court, in the press and on the platforms of the United States it was declared that if the alleged misconduct of the British Government were submitted to arbitration, no matter what the verdict might be, an era of good feeling between the two nations would ensue, no sooner was the verdict rendered than it was used as a text upon which to expiate upon the sins of Great Britain; these, it was argued, no longer could be in doubt, since they had been affirmed by a high court of justice. So the better understanding with the United States, which, like man's blessing, always is to come, but never comes, was again indefinitely postponed.

If the foregoing be anything like a fair statement of the salient features of the relations existing between Great Britain and the United States since the establishment of the latter as a sovereign confederacy, which the writer verily believes it to be, then "the past conduct of England" does not appear to have been so comprehensively and clearly iniquitous as to deprive her of the benefit of the doubt. Neither does that of the Great Republic appear to have been so evidently inspired by such unfailing righteous intent as to entitle it to cast the first stone at offending nations. And it seems to me that though the British Government has not always

THE FACTS

regarded that of the United States as being implicitly trustworthy, and though the British people have not always cherished the deepest respect and affection for their American cousins—they would have been more or less than human had they done so—yet, throughout its existence, the Government of the United States has been dealt with in the most liberal spirit by that of Great Britain, and their citizens—when they so permitted—treated with kindly consideration by the British people.

But the writer does not wish to be misunderstood. It is not his intention to intimate that the Government and people of Great Britain, in their dealings with alien governments, have always been without fault. This treatise is written for the purpose of exposing a myth, not fabricating one.

The fact has been mentioned that, during their existence as a nation, there have been many generous friends to Great Britain among the citizens of the United States, native to their soil. The writer is loath to close this treatise without mention of one now living, who in generous sentiments towards the Government and people of Great Britain has never been surpassed by any of his countrymen.

During the recent conflict in South Africa, amid the storm of vituperation poured upon England and everything English by the patriotic journals and orators of the United States, Mr. Ambrose Bierce, of Washington—than whom no man of more brilliant attainments exists between the two oceans—manfully and generously defended them from these virulent attacks, not hesitating to castigate, with the severity they deserved, such of his countrymen as had been foremost in this malevolent warfare—as, indeed, he had done on many similar occasions.

At that time Mr. Bierce wrote, in part:

“It was to be expected that if Great Britain got into trouble through anything but her support of us, she would have a pack of American ingrates and ignoramus lifting their raucous voices in abuse of her. The

MYTHS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Ingallses and their disagreeable sort are not disarmed nor distongued by friendly service; they are of the breed of dogs that snap at the hand which feeds them. Being the product of our common schools (which are the worst in the world) they naturally absorb the spirit of our school 'histories,' written for the purpose of keeping alight the fires of hate kindled by our War of the Revolution, and fed by that of 1812. Nowhere in literature are so monstrous and mischievous falsehoods found as in these abominable books; to them, more than to all other causes, we owe our shameful heritage of hate against the best, wisest, freest and most powerful Empire that, so far as we know, the world has ever seen. . . . To their [the Ingallses, etc.] indoctrinated understandings, whatever England does, or does not, she is always actuated by selfishness, meanness and cowardice. . . . They do not shame to think, despite repeated manifestations of enthusiastic loyalty, that such popular and powerful colonies as Canada and those of Australia hate the mother country and groan beneath her iron rule. These bigoted and besotted men live in a fools' paradise of their own creation, cultivating a congenial animosity and patriotic rancor. With such Dead-Sea apples, culled from their infertile mental environment, they inoculate themselves with an added bitterness until every dam's whelp of them becomes merely *anima lupi habitans in sicca*. It were a God's mercy if they were all shot."

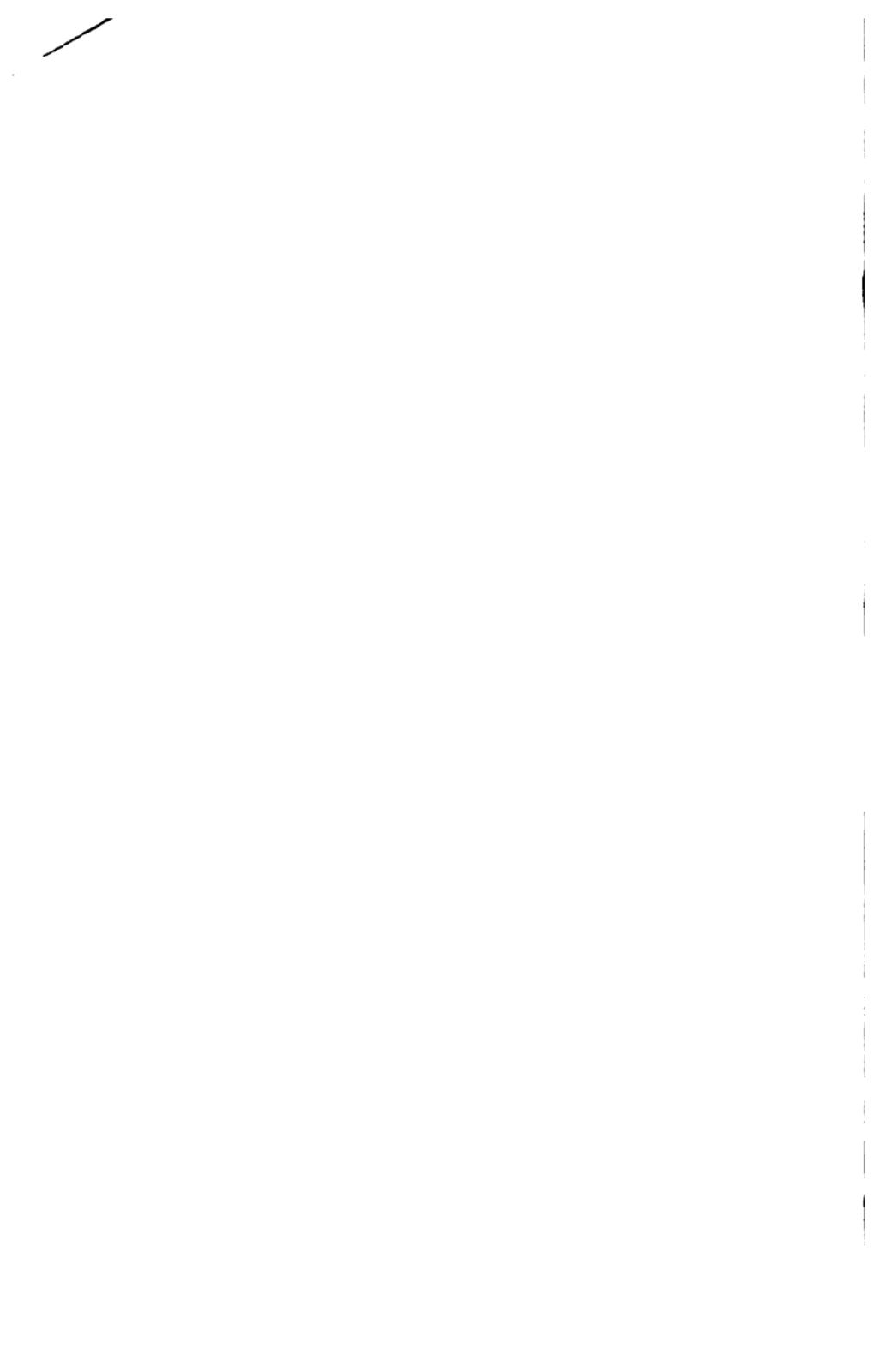
A "massacre" indeed! Mr. Bierce, after showing the necessity for Great Britain to defend her rule in South Africa, continued:

" Apart from such considerations, above them, and superior and imperious, is our debt of gratitude to the mighty Empire that guarded us from intervention by the glowering European powers while we wrested Cuba from Spanish misrule. Compared with our own quarrel in the Philippines, that of Great Britain against the Dutch republic is a holy war; but if it were not, we should still be bound in honor to do for her what she did for us,

THE FACTS

'keep a ring,' and let her fight it out unmolested. To do less would be to notify the nations of the earth that in future wars we abdicate all right of alliance and forego all hopes of neutrality."

So long as there are such men as Ambrose Bierce, citizens of the Great Republic, that can command a hearing from their countrymen, there will always be good reason to believe in the coming of a true and sincere friendship between the two nations. At least, let us hope so.



NOTES

CHAPTER I.

Page 17 (¹), “‘an infatuated ministry.’”

“*An infatuated ministry,*” Samuel Adams is reported to have said, in a speech to the Congress a few weeks after the Declaration of Independence; “men who, unmindful of their relations to you as brethren; of your long implicit submission to their laws; of the sacrifices which you and your forefathers made of your natural advantages for commerce to their avarice; formed a deliberate plan to wrest from you the small pittance of property which they had permitted you to acquire. Remember that the men who wish to rule over you are they who, in pursuit of this *plan of despotism*, annulled the sacred contracts which they had made with your ancestors.”

Page 17 (²), “or even suspicion of offence.”

Declaration of the Second Continental Congress.

And in a resolution of the Massachusetts Convention, adopted June 7th, 1775, it was declared that: “General Gage hath actually levied war, and is carrying on hostilities against his Majesty’s peaceable and loyal subjects.” But long before this declaration was made, that Convention had raised an army composed of such peaceable and loyal subjects for the purpose of making war upon their liege lord.

Page 18 (³), “without distinction of age or sex.”

“Desolation and massacre have marked their [the British] steps wherever they could approach. The sending of those captives, whom they pretend now to be their fellow-subjects, into perpetual slavery in Africa and India; the crowding of their captives into dungeons where thousands perish by disease and famine; the compelling of others, by chains and stripes, to fight against their country and their relations; the burning of defenceless towns, and the exciting of the savages, by presents and bribes, to massacre defenceless frontier families with-

NOTES

*out distinction of age or sex, are extremities of cruelty already practised, and which they cannot exceed."—Arthur Lee to Florida Blanca, December 17, 1778: *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, Vol. II., p. 859.*

Page 19 (⁴), "with tears and lamentations."

"They loved their mother country with the love of children, who, forsaking their homes under strong provocation, turn back to them in thought, when time has blunted the sense of injury, with a lively recollection of early associations and endearments, a tenderness and a longing not altogether free from self-reproach."—Greene's *Historical View of the American Revolution*, p. 5.

Upon this Professor von Holst comments, with a child-like confidence in its truth. "This fact," he writes, "is frequently too much lost sight of in Europe. The colonists severed themselves from England with bleeding hearts."—*Constitutional History of the United States*, Vol. I., p. II.

Every English historian has fallen into the same error. As writes one of the latest: "All Americans, Whigs or Patriots, with few exceptions, as well as Tories or Loyalists, were devoted to the colonial relation."—*Cambridge Modern History*.

Page 20 (⁵), "drunk large draughts."

The laudation and denunciation of England, her people and her King, were written by the same hand, that of that arch double-dealer, Benjamin Franklin. They occur in the following named letters: To Lord Kames, August 17, 1762; to Mary Stevenson, March 25, 1763; to Samuel Cooper, April 27, 1769; to Mary Stevenson, September 14, 1767; to John Ross, May 14, 1768; to Samuel Cooper, April 27, 1769; to Joseph Gallo-way, February 25, 1775; to Mrs. Mary Hanson, January 12, 1777; to John Winthrop, May 1, 1777; to David Hartley, February 3, 1779; to James Lovell, October 17, 1779, and to David Hartley, February 2, 1780: Franklin's *Writings*, Vol. VII., pp. 240, 246, 361, 402, 438; Vol. VIII., pp. 146, 195, 215, 316, 398, 416; Vol. V., p. 135.

The Lords, too, successively excited the admiration and contempt of Franklin. In 1766, at which time he appears to have been uncertain which side to take in the coming contest between the colonies and the motherland, he asserted that there was "not a wiser or better body of men on earth," and that he was impressed with "deep respect" for them, "for their justice." Nine years later, when there was no longer any doubt as to which side he would ally himself, he discovered that these same Lords had "scarce discretion enough to govern a herd of

NOTES

swine." To be sure, he added this saving clause: "The elected House of Commons is no better."—Franklin's *Writings*, Vol. IV., p. 207; Vol. V., p. 54.

Page 20 (⁶), "to govern themselves."

"Americans," writes Professor von Holst, "frequently fall into the dangerous error, and flatter themselves that heaven governs them by laws altogether peculiar to themselves and their country."—*Constitutional History of the United States*, Vol. I., p. 31.

Page 20 (⁷), "for the people."

This famous speech of President Lincoln seems to be accepted by all as expressing unquestionable truths; yet it would be difficult to indicate an utterance of the same length containing half so many misstatements of fact.

Page 24 (⁸), "for the benefit of the enemies of their country."

What Professor Tyler styles "the supine blundering of Howe" was not all blundering. That he was guilty of treason to his King and country in his zeal to serve his party there can be no doubt. That he was weak and vacillating cannot alone account for his acts. His brother, the admiral, was equally willing to oblige his party by sacrificing his country, but his position did not afford him the same opportunity for mischief. For General Howe's "political motives" for not destroying the enemy in the field, see *The Narrative of Lieutenant-General Sir William Howe*, London, 1780, p. 6; *Parliamentary Register, House of Commons*, Vol. XIII., p. 3; also Force's *American Archives* (Fourth Series), Vol. V., pp. 458, 523, 934, 935; Gordon's *American Revolution*; Steadman's *American War*.

Page 26 (⁹), "the sharp crack of the whip."

Ten Events in History, pp. 244, 245.

A few years ago Mr. Goldwin Smith asserted that, after an investigation of the subject, he had become convinced that the school histories of the United States contained no teachings likely to arouse sentiments of animosity to the motherland in the minds of American youth. It would seem that the distinguished gentleman was imposed upon by sham samples of these histories; for it is certain that he could not have entered any school library in the United States and examined its shelves without finding works similar to those from which I have quoted, existing in lavish abundance in every school library between the two oceans.

NOTES

CHAPTER II.

Page 30 ('), "should have helped to defray."

The proposals made by Grenville, in 1764, for taxing the colonies, which a year later were formulated in the Stamp Act, so often stigmatized as "the cause of the Revolution," as related by Israel Mauduit, the agent for the Province of Massachusetts, were as follows:

Mr. Grenville emphasized the fact that the Seven Years' War had increased the national debt from seventy millions to one hundred and forty million pounds. It was his duty, as a steward of the public, to use every just means for relieving the public burdens. That he did not intend to ask the colonies to pay any part of the national debt, or its interest, but that the Government had incurred other burdens in consequence of that war; the maintenance of the newly conquered territory, the conquest of which had greatly benefited the colonies, and the greatly increased expense of the civil and military establishments of the colonies. Some part of the expense of these establishments he thought the colonies should bear, and, therefore, he proposed a stamp duty for that purpose. "I am not, however," he added, "set upon this tax. If the Americans dislike it, and prefer some other method of raising the money themselves, I shall be content. Write, therefore, to your several colonies [Massachusetts and Virginia], and if they choose any other mode, I shall be satisfied, provided the money be raised." He intimated, said Mauduit, that by agreeing to the proposed tax the colonists would create a precedent for being consulted by the ministry before measures for their taxation were brought into Parliament.

William Knox, the Under Secretary for the Colonies, gives a similar account, and adds: "Mr. Grenville, indeed, went so far as to desire the agents to acquaint the colonies that *if they could not agree among themselves upon raising a revenue by their own assemblies*, yet if they all, or any of them, dislike stamp duties, and would propose any other sort of tax which would carry the appearance of equal efficacy, he would adopt it. *But he warmly recommended to them the making grants by their own assemblies.*"

In reply to the communication of Mauduit informing it of Mr. Grenville's proposal, and that the introduction of the measure was to be suspended for a year to give the colonies time for consideration, the Assembly of Massachusetts wrote: "This suspension amounts to no more than this, that, *if the colonies will not tax themselves*, as they may be directed, the Parliament will tax them."

NOTES

All this shows beyond reasonable question that it was the wish of Mr. Grenville that that part of the expense of their establishments that he believed the colonies ought to pay should be raised by their own assemblies, or, failing that, that it should be raised by act of parliament, with the consent of the colonies expressed through their agents.

Yet this always has been denied by American writers, who assert that Mr. Grenville gave them no choice but to submit to taxation by Parliament. Franklin declared that Mr. Grenville "chose compulsion rather than persuasion, and would not receive from their good-will what he thought he could obtain without it;" and answered the complaint of an English pamphleteer that the colonies not only had refused to contribute voluntarily, but "did not think it expedient to return an answer," with the sophistical plea that though they might have been told that "a revenue *would* be required," it never *had* been required.

Bancroft, as might be expected, ignores or distorts the evidence of Mauduit and Knox, who were present when Mr. Grenville made his declaration, and building upon the statements of Franklin, who was three thousand miles away, intimates that parliamentary taxation was the sole choice left to the colonists, and asserts that the suggestion of Mr. Grenville, that the colonial assemblies consider the matter, was made "only for form's sake."

Consult Mauduit's *Short View of the History of the New England Colonies*; Knox's *The Claims of the Colonies to an Exemption from Internal Taxes; A Letter to a Member of Parliament; The Controversy Between Great Britain and Her Colonies; The Annual Register for 1765*; Franklin's *Writings*, Vol. I., p. 293, Vol. IV., p. 537; Bancroft's *History of the United States*, Vol. III, p. 415.

The fact is that the colonial assemblies—which had fallen to a greater or lesser extent under the control of Disunion factions—had no intention of "raising a revenue" for the purpose of relieving the Home Government of any part of its burden of taxation, even though its proceeds were to be applied to the payment of their own expenses. The Seven Years' War had been fought and won; the French no longer troubled their borders, and the power of Britain was no longer needed to protect them or to acquire for them new territory.

Page 30 (²), "and with their co-operation."

See Hillsborough's circular, sent to the colonial governors in 1769, in which it is declared that the Government "entertained no design to propose to Parliament to lay any further taxes on America for the purpose of raising a revenue."—Grahame's

NOTES

History of the Rise and Progress of the United States, Vol. IV., p. 297.

Page 31 (8), "a late period of the Revolutionary propaganda."

In 1757, and again in 1761, the Legislature of Massachusetts emphatically affirmed the supreme authority of Parliament. At that time no limitation of its power of taxation was asserted or thought of. But after the Peace of Paris it began to be argued by the Revolutionary propagandists that the authority of Parliament to tax the colonists was confined to what they were pleased to call "external taxation." In 1765, in a resolution of the "Stamp Act" Congress, it was so declared, and it was added: "That no taxes ever have been or can be constitutionally imposed on them [the colonists] but by their respective legislatures." But even in this Congress it was admitted: "That his Majesty's subjects in these Colonies owe . . . all due subordination to that august body, the Parliament of Great Britain."

Three years later, in 1768, the Massachusetts Legislature, in a petition to the King, said:

"With great sincerity, permit us to assure your Majesty that your subjects of this province ever have, and still continue to acknowledge your Majesty's High Court of Parliament the supreme legislative power of the whole Empire, the superintending authority of which is clearly admitted in all cases that can consist with the fundamental rights of nature and the constitution."

At the same time, in a letter to Secretary Conway, the Legislature declared that:

"The House is at all times ready to recognize his Majesty's High Court of Parliament the supreme legislative power over the whole Empire. Its superintending authority, in all cases consisting with the fundamental rules of the constitution, is as clearly admitted by his Majesty's subjects in this province as by those within the realm."

In another to Lord Rockingham it was said: "The superintending power of that High Court over all his Majesty's subjects in the Empire, in all cases which can consist with the fundamental rules of the constitution, was never questioned in this province, nor, as the House conceives, in any other."

And to Lord Camden the Massachusetts Legislature gave its assurance that: "The superintending authority of his Majesty's High Court of Parliament over the whole Empire, in all cases which can consist with the fundamental rights of the constitution, was never questioned in this province, nor, as the House conceives, in any other." See Story's *Constitution of the United States*, Vol. I., p. 174.

NOTES

Yet, strange to say, not only had it been questioned, but emphatically denied, and in that very House; and, stranger still, by one of the committee that drafted the resolution that declared it had never been questioned in any House—Joseph Hawley. But these little inconsistencies not infrequently confront the student of Revolutionary history.

Franklin, too, during his examination in the House of Commons, in 1776, declared that: “The authority of Parliament was allowed to be valid in all laws, except such as should lay internal taxes.”—*Writings*, Vol. IV., pp. 169, 170.

Page 32 (4), “has no ground in reason.”

In a letter, “Concerning the Gratitude of America,” written in January, 1766, Franklin wrote: “If the Parliament has a right to take from us a penny in the pound, where is the line drawn that bounds that right, and what shall hinder their calling, whenever they please, for the other nineteen shillings and eleven pence?”—*Writings*, Vol. IV., pp. 158, 159.

This, of course, was written when the Disunion party were trying to throw off the authority of Parliament; therefore, there should be no surprise in the fact that seventeen years later, when the confederate colonies had a parliament of their own, Franklin’s doctrine of the right of legislative taxation had completely changed. At that time there was manifested a general disposition to refuse to pay taxes. Commenting upon this sentiment, Franklin wrote: “The remissness of our people in paying taxes is highly blamable; the unwillingness to pay them is still more so. I see, in some resolutions of town meetings, a remonstrance against giving Congress the power to take, as they call it, the people’s money out of their pockets . . . They seem to mistake the point. Money justly due from the people is their creditor’s money, and no longer the money of the people, who, if they withhold it, should be compelled to pay it by some law.”—Franklin to Robert Morris, December 25, 1783: Franklin’s *Writings*, Vol. X., p. 43.

Page 32 (5), “without their consent.”

In 1814, John Marshall, the greatest jurist that ever sat on the Supreme Bench of the United States, in his decision in the case of *McCulloch vs. the State of Maryland*, said: “It is admitted that the power of taxing the people and their property is essential to the very existence of government, and may be legitimately exercised on the objects to which it is applicable to the utmost extent to which the Government may choose to carry it. . . . It is obvious that it is an incident

NOTES

of sovereignty, and is co-extensive with that to which it is an incident. *All subjects over which the sovereign power of a State extends are subjects of taxation.* . . . These propositions may almost be pronounced self-evident."

In 1842, Mr. Justice Wayne, in giving the opinion of the Court in the case of *Dobbins vs. Erie County*, declared that: "Taxation is a sacred right, essential to the existence of a government; an incident of sovereignty. The right of legislation is co-extensive with this incident, to attach it upon all persons and property within the jurisdiction of a State."

See, also, the opinions upon the same subject, and to the same effect, given by Chief Justice Ellsworth, Chancellor Livingston, Mr. Justice Strong, and, especially, that of Associate Justice Horace Gray, of the Supreme Court of the United States.

Page 34 (6), "would have dreamed of enforcing them."

Of these acts John Adams wrote: "The Hatters' Act was never regarded. . . . The act against slitting-mills and tilt-hammers never was executed here."—"Novanglus," *Works*, Vol. IV., p. 49.

✓
P.M.
Page 34 (6), "would have dreamed of enforcing them."
Yet, though well knowing these facts, and himself having declared that manufactures were of no advantage to the colonies, whose "true source of riches is husbandry," Franklin had the audacity to condemn the Home Government for restricting them in the very matter of these Hatters' and Slitting-mill acts.—Franklin to Dr. Evans, February 29, 1768: "Political Observations;" *Writings*, Vol. VII., p. 337; Vol. IV., p. 226.

Page 35 (7), "would not have consented to their repeal."

✓
Page 35 (7), "would not have consented to their repeal."
Lord Chatham, "the friend of America," had declared that if the colonists "would disengage themselves from the laws of trade and navigation," they would not "have a more determined opposer than they would find in him." Lord Hillsborough, the "Tory," "said he had always been of opinion that America ought not to be restrained in manufacturing anything she could manufacture to advantage. . . . He censured Lord Chatham for affecting in his speech that Parliament had a right or ought to restrain manufactures in the colonies."—Speech of Chatham, reported by Johnson of Connecticut. Franklin to Cushing, January 13, 1772. Franklin's *Works*, Vol. VII., p. 556.

Page 36 (8), "affiliated with the Revolutionists."

There were many. Two examples may be cited, as illustrating the extremes of culture and refinement—Gouverneur Morris and Ethan Allen. The former declared that Washington believed no more in *that system* than he did himself.

NOTES

Page 36 (⁹), "had never asked for it."

At his examination before the House of Commons, in 1766, Franklin was asked: Before there was any thought of the Stamp Act, did they (the colonists) wish for a representation in Parliament? To which question Franklin answered, laconically and emphatically, "No."

Later, Franklin wrote: "The Americans are by their constitutions provided with a representation [in their local assemblies], and, therefore, *neither need nor desire any* in the British Parliament. *They have never asked any such thing.*"

Again: "*We ask no representation among you.*" And: "*We do not desire to come among you.*"—Franklin's *Writings*, Vol. IV., pp. 195, 221, 223.

Yet Franklin universally has been credited with a desire for colonial parliamentary representation, the well-informed Lecky being equally mistaken with the others.

Page 36 (¹⁰), "declared it unachievable."

With one doubtful exception. Burke, in one of his speeches, said: "I do not absolutely assert the impracticability of such a representation. But I do not see my way to it."—*Works*, Vol. III., p. 274.

But Burke was as much opposed to it as were his colleagues, and would not have joined in any attempt to accomplish it.

Page 37 (¹¹), "if not in form, they were."

Bryan Fairfax to Washington, July, 1774: Washington's *Writings*, Vol. II., p. 395.

And Benjamin Franklin, in a letter to Cushing, wrote (this, of course, was not to be published to the world): "Though called petitions, they are rather remonstrances and protests."—Franklin's *Writings*, Vol. VIII., p. 119.

Page 37 (¹²), "an enemy to liberty and humanity."

Joseph Galloway, a member of the Second Continental Congress, drew up and presented to that body a Plan of Union, which he proposed should be adopted as a settlement of the controversy of the colonies with the Home Government. This plan, had it been adopted, would have given to the colonies as liberal a constitution as has any British colony at the present day; yet it was fiercely opposed by Samuel and John Adams and their followers from New England and Virginia, expunged from the minutes of the Congress, and its author so persecuted as to force him to leave the Congress and join the ranks of the Loyalists.

NOTES

Page 46 (¹³), "alleged by Mr. Roosevelt."

"He [King George] fairly rivalled the Stuarts in *his perfidy, wrongheadedness*, political debauchery, and attempts to destroy free government and replace it by a system of personal despotism. . . . It is perfectly possible that if British statesmen had shown less *crass and brutal stupidity* . . . this feeling of loyalty would have been strong enough to keep England and America united."—*Gouverneur Morris*, pp. 7, 8.

Page 46 (¹⁴), "of such an alternative."

As early as February, 1766, Lord Mansfield foresaw the effect of the doctrine of Chatham and his colleagues, which held that Parliament had no authority to tax the colonies, warned them of its disastrous consequences, and exposed the fallacy of their contention by citing constitutional law. The speech should be read in its entirety. It is a remarkable prophecy of the results of the foolish and selfish policy of the Whigs; even predicting the neglect of the Loyalists by the Government under Whig influence.

Page 46 (¹⁵), "under the British constitution."

Examples abound in petitions, manifestoes and writings of the Disunion leaders. Perhaps the most remarkable and characteristic is that contained in a pamphlet of Franklin, in which it is said: "As the Americans are now *without* the realm [of England], and not of the jurisdiction of Parliament, *the spirit of the British Constitution dictates* that they should be taxed by their own representatives."—"Political Observations;" *Writings*, Vol. IV., p. 216.

Page 46 (¹⁶), "them or their respective states."

Especially the Quebec Act, which established a form of government favorable to the Catholic population of Canada. In 1774, the First Continental Congress "claimed, demanded and insisted" upon the repeal of some dozen acts of Parliament, among them the Quebec Act, styled by the Congress "the act passed for the establishing of the Roman Catholic religion in the Province of Quebec;" which province, according to the contention of the Disunionists that each colony was an independent state, was connected in no way with the thirteen colonies represented in the Congress.

Page 47 (¹⁷), "made war upon the Home Government."

After denying the fact for seven years, Franklin, presumably by a slip of his pen, admitted it. In a letter to Hartley, dated

NOTES

January 15, 1782, he wrote: "In fact, we began the war for independence on your Government, which we found tyrannical." —*Writings*, Vol. IX., p. 144.

Page 47 (18), "in any way molested."

By means of mob attacks on Government officials, among them the Chief Justice of Massachusetts; the attack on the *Gaspee*, a Government vessel, during which its commander was severely wounded, and the attack on Fort William and Mary, and on the Government troops at Lexington; all of which circumstances are related, in a more or less distorted manner, in American histories. See Arnold's *History of Rhode Island*, Vol. II., pp. 309-320.

Page 47 (19), "the leaders of the royal forces."

It may be that there exists a true account of this contest written by an American participant. The late Moncure D. Conway informed the writer that in looking through a large number of unpublished manuscripts (in the Worcester Library, he thought) he discovered an account of the Lexington affair, written by one of the "minute men," in which it was affirmed that the Americans were the first to open fire. Mr. Conway assured the writer that, at the first opportunity, he would renew the search for this manuscript, but the opportunity never occurred.

Page 49 (20), "France, that happy land of Bastiles."

A strain on one's credulity, yet see a letter from Richmond to Burke, written from Paris, August 26, 1776: "Who knows that a time may not come when England may not be worth living in, and when a retreat to this country may be a happy thing to have?"—Burke's *Works*, Vol. I., p. 316.

Page 50 (21), "to go on with the war."

Arthur Lee to Lieutenant-Governor Colden, February 13, 1776; A. Lee to Lieutenant-Governor Colden, February 14, 1776; Benjamin Franklin to Gates, August 28, 1776.—*Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, Vol. II., pp. 73, 77; Franklin's *Writings*, Vol. VIII., p. 186.

Page 51 (22), "to cripple the power both of Great Britain and her colonies."

That in granting these supplies it was not the intent of the French minister or King to help the colonies to independence—

NOTES

though later developments made it necessary for them to guarantee that independence—but only to weaken the power of Great Britain, and by consequence that of her colonies, is clearly shown in a letter written to the King, in April, 1776, by Caron de Beaumarchais, the celebrated author of "The Marriage of Figaro," the originator of the plan. In this letter, or memorial, entitled, "*La Paix ou la Guerre*," addressed "Au Roi Seul," occurs the following passage:

"Enfin l'exécution de ce plan réunit à tant d'avantages l'importante faculté de restreindre ou d'étendre une continuité de bienfaits au gré de votre prudence, et selon que la situation des Américains deviendra plus ou moins pressante; en sorte que ce secours sagelement administré, serve moins à faire terminer la guerre entre l'Amérique et l'Angleterre, qu'à l'entretenir et l'alimenter au grand domage des Anglais—nos ennemis naturels et décidés."—Doniol's *Histoire de la participation de la France à la Etablissement des États-Unis d'Amérique*, Vol. I., p. 251.

As it is admitted that it was the force of these arguments that decided the King and his minister to grant the necessary aid to the revolting colonists, it cannot be doubted that the action of the French Government was induced by the desire to destroy the power of Great Britain, and not by any desire to aid the colonies in gaining their independence.

The munitions of war and other supplies granted by the French Government to the revolting colonists passed through the hands of Beaumarchais. For this purpose he was furnished with funds by the Count de Vergennes, the French minister. As a convenient means for distributing these supplies, Beaumarchais established a pretended mercantile house under the name of Rodrigo Hortalez & Cie. For the whole story, see: Lovenie's *Beaumarchais and His Times*, Martin's *History of the Decline of the French Monarchy*, Guizot's *History of France*, and, particularly, Doniol's *Histoire de la participation de la France à la Etablissement des États-Unis d'Amérique*, above referred to.

CHAPTER III.

Page 53 (¹), "to whet their hatchet."

On April 4, 1775, the Massachusetts Provincial Congress sent an address to the Six Nations, through their agent, Samuel Kirkland, in which they were exhorted to "whet their hatchet, and be prepared to defend our liberties and lives."—Force's *American Archives* (Fourth Series), pp. 1349, 1350.

NOTES

Page 53 (2), “‘ambush’ British soldiers.”

“On the 24th of May [1775], Ethan Allen addressed a letter to several tribes of the Canadian Indians, asking their warriors to join with his warriors ‘like brothers, and ambush the regulars.’”—Winsor’s *Narrative and Critical History of America*, Vol. VI., p. 614, note.

Page 53 (3), “like herds of wild cattle.”

On the 25th of May, 1776, the Continental Congress resolved: “That it is highly expedient to engage the Indians in the service of the United Colonies.” On June 3rd of the same year, the Congress empowered Washington to employ a number of Indians, not exceeding two thousand. On June 14th, the Congress instructed their agents to “engage the Six Nations in our interest, on the best terms that can be procured.” On the 17th, General Washington was authorized “to offer a reward of one hundred dollars for every commissioned officer, and thirty dollars for every private soldier of the King’s troops, that they should take prisoners.”—*Secret Journal of the Congress*, May 25th, June 3rd, June 14th and June 17th, 1776, pp. 44 et seq.

Page 53 (4), “sexes and conditions.”

“He has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.”—*Declaration of Independence*.

Page 53 (5), “being employed by the British.”

“The wild and barbarous savages of the wilderness have been solicited by gifts to take up the hatchet against us, and instigated to deluge our settlements with the blood of defenceless women and children.”—Address *To the People of Ireland*, adopted July 28, 1776.

Page 54 (6), “employed themselves in killing
‘regulars.’”

“A company of ‘Minute Men,’ before the 19th of April [1775], had been embodied among the Stockbridge tribe of Indians, and this company repaired to camp. On the 21st of June, two of the Indians, probably of this company, killed four of the regulars with their bows and arrows, and plundered them.”—Frothingham’s *Siege of Boston*, p. 212.

In the same work it is related that, on the 25th of June, “the Indians killed more of the British guard,” and that, on the 26th, they “went down near Bunker Hill and killed a sentry.”

NOTES

Also, in the *Boston Gazette* of August 7, 1775, it was stated that "Parties of riflemen, together with some Indians, are constantly harassing the enemy's advance guards, and say they have killed several of the regulars within a day or two past."

From the *New York Colonial Documents*, Vol. VIII., p. 740; Force's *American Archives* (Fifth Series) Vol. I., p. 1120, Vol. II., p. 1120; Jones' *Annals of Oneida County*, pp. 854, 888; and the *Magazine of American History*, Vol. V., p. 187, we learn that Indians were employed in the Revolutionary armies, at Long Island, at White Plains, and even as late as August 31, 1778, at King's Bridge.

Page 54 (1), "already had engaged them in arms."

On the 5th of July, 1775, Lord Dartmouth wrote to Colonel Guy Johnson, instructing him to "keep the Indians in such a state of affection and attachment to the King as that his Majesty may rely upon their assistance in any case in which it may be necessary." Three weeks later these instructions were followed by an order to Johnson to take "such steps as may induce them to take up the hatchet against his Majesty's rebellious subjects in America, and to engage them in his Majesty's service, upon such plan as shall be suggested by General Gage." The reason given for this order being: "*The intelligence his Majesty has received of the rebels having excited the Indians to take a part, and of their having actually engaged a body of them in arms to support their rebellion.*"—*Documents on the Colonial History of New York*, Vol. VIII., p. 596.

Page 54 (2), "instructed to keep the Indians neutral."

At the Albany Conference, in August, 1775, the Indians emphatically asserted that Colonel Johnson had urged them to remain neutral. See *Collections of Massachusetts Historical Society*, Vol. XXV., p. 75. MS. of the Record Office (Plantations General) cited by Lecky: *Border Wars of the Revolution*, Vol. I., pp. 94, 95.

Page 57 (3), "should have had the grace to ignore."

The Winning of the West, Vol. II., p. 87.

In happy contrast to the charges of inhumanity made against British officers in the body of Mr. Roosevelt's book is a letter inserted in its appendix, and quoted from the Haldimand MSS. The letter is from Alexander McKee, a much-maligned "Tory," to Major De Peyster, and is as follows:

"I am this day favored with yours of the 6th of August, containing the report of Isaac Gians concerning the cruelties

NOTES

of the Indians. It is true they have made sacrifices to their revenge, after the massacre of their women and children, [of?] some being known to them to be perpetrators of it, but it was done in my absence, or before I could reach any of the places to interfere. *And I can assure you, sir, there is not a white person here wanting in their duty to represent to the Indians in the strongest terms the highest abhorrence of such conduct.* . . . However, it is not impossible that *Gians may have exaggerated matters, being notoriously known for a dissatisfied person, and concerned in sending prisoners away with intelligence to the enemy.*"

Strangely benevolent sentiments to be expressed by an aider and abettor of the "slaughter of men, women and children." It seems unfortunate that Mr. Roosevelt did not notice this letter in connection with his statements about scalp-buying, instead of hiding it away in the Appendix.

Page 57 (¹⁰), "by the state legislatures."

By one of them, at least. In the *Journal of the Proceedings of the South Carolina Assembly*, on September 27, 1776, there is recorded a report of a committee which "recommended the following rewards: For every Indian man killed, and certificate thereof given by the commanding officer, *and the scalp produced as evidence thereof*, in Charles Town, by the forces in the pay of this State, one hundred pounds currency." Upon this report it was ordered by the Assembly, "that the reward for Indian scalps should be seventy-five pounds."—Force's *American Archives* (Fifth Series), Vol. III., pp. 32, 33.

Page 58 (¹¹), "in their 'histories' as a fact."

See Franklin's *Writings*, Vol. V., p. 125, *et seq.*

Mr. Jared Sparks naively remarks of this abominable libel: "The humor of this piece consists chiefly in its exact imitation of the style of such compositions, and of the typography and other characteristics of a Boston newspaper." Analogously, "the humor" of a forged will or cheque should consist in the exact imitation of the handwriting of the testator or drawer of the draft.

Page 59 (¹²), "employ them in the Revolutionary armies."

"I am sensible that if they [the Caughnawaga Indians] do not desire to be idle, they will be for us or against us. . . . Their proffered services, therefore, ought not to be rejected."—Washington to Schuyler, January 27, 1776: Washington's *Writings*, Vol. III., p. 263.

"You, who know the temper and disposition of the savages,

NOTES

will, I doubt not, think with me that it will be impossible to keep them in a state of neutrality. I have urged upon the Congress the necessity of engaging them on our side."—Washington to Schuyler, April 19, 1776: *Writings*, Vol. III., p. 363.

"In my opinion it will be an impossibility to keep them [the Indians] in a state of neutrality. . . . I submit it to the consideration of the Congress whether it would not be best immediately to engage them on our side."—Washington to the President of the Congress, April 19, 1776: *Writings*, Vol. III., p. 364.

"I hope the bounty which Congress have agreed to allow . . . will prove a powerful inducement to engage Indians in our service."—Washington to Schuyler, June 20, 1776: *Writings*, Vol. III., p. 431.

Page 59 (¹³), "during their raids."

This is a fact well known to those acquainted with Indian customs, and admitted to be true by the American General Clinton, who, in his instructions to burn Indian villages, given to his subordinate, Colonel van Schaick, wrote: "Bad as the savages are, they never violate the chastity of any women, their prisoners."

But Mr. Roosevelt, who is supposed to be learned in Indian customs, and acquainted with the facts of the Revolution, asserts that, during the Revolutionary War, the colonists "saw their homes destroyed, *their wives outraged*, their children captured, their friends butchered and tortured wholesale, by Indians armed with British weapons."—*The Winning of the West*, Vol. I., p. 278.

Page 60 (¹⁴), "out of all semblance to the truth."

The so-called "Massacre of Wyoming" and the attack on Cherry Valley, the two instances in which great loss of life was sustained by the colonists by an Indian attack during the War of the Revolution—as in the case of every act in which the British or Loyalists took part—have been greatly distorted in the narration by American writers and their British imitators.

When Thomas Campbell published his grotesque poem (*Gerrtrude of Wyoming*), founded on the Loyalists' attack on the armed stockades in the Wyoming valley, he intimated that he had obtained his information from "authentic accounts" contained in "most of the popular histories of England, as well as those of the American War." This, no doubt, was the case; but it would seem that at least some of these "authentic accounts" came from Isaac Weld, who obtained his information during his travels in the United States.

Amazingly absurd as is the description of the habits and dis-

NOTES

position of the settlers in the Wyoming Valley at the time of the attack, given in the poem, and glaringly false, as is the account of that attack there given, at the time of its publication it seems to have been accepted in all gravity as fairly representing the facts. Even now it would be difficult to find one here and there who has even a remote idea of the truth.

The attack on the settlement, far from being an unexpected raid, as Campbell depicts it, was made by an approach in due form of war, and the defenders had ample notice of its coming, issuing from their stockades and giving battle in the woods. They were defeated, and fled in confusion to their strongholds, which, after a vain attempt to defend, were surrendered, by written articles of capitulation, the victors guaranteeing to them their lives and protection for their property. The guarantee was honorably adhered to by Colonel Butler, the Loyalist commander, one man only—one Sergeant Boyd, a deserter from the Loyalist ranks—being executed. *Not another life was taken by the invading force*, though some little plundering, which the commander could not prevent, was done by the Indians.

But what of “accursed Brant!” that fiend in human form? He has been charged with the perpetration of two “massacres,” one on the occasion of the attack on Wyoming, at which no massacre was perpetrated, and at which he was not present at any time; the other at Cherry Valley, at which something like a massacre was perpetrated, where he was present, but arrived too late to prevent the slaughter, though he used his utmost endeavor to do so, and did succeed in saving the lives of at least one family, threatened by a band of Indians over whom he had no control. On this occasion, neither Brant, who was in command of a contingent of Indians, nor Captain Butler, who was in command of the Loyalist force, were able to prevent some atrocities committed by the Indians, who were animated by feelings of revenge for the burning of one of their villages by the Revolutionists. “The inhabitants killed at Cherry Valley do not lay at my door,” wrote Captain Butler; “my conscience acquits me.”

Joseph Brant, or Thayendanegea, was a man of honor, probity and chivalrous ideals. He was not without education, having been employed by Colonel Guy Johnson as his private secretary. Many stories are told of his bravery and generosity, among them one of his restoring to its mother an infant carried off in a raid, with the assurance that Brant did not war against women. The Baroness Reidesel, who met him at Quebec, in her *Memoirs* says of him: “His manners are polished; he expressed himself with fluency. . . . His countenance was manly and intelligent, and his disposition very mild.” A curious estimate of this “unearthly fiend.”

NOTES

Page 62 (¹⁵), "roasting and eating them."

Speech of Chatham, on "The Attempt to Subjugate America."

One may well wonder where the noble lord got his idea of actions so foreign to the customs of the American Indians; the last place, one would suppose, would be from the colonies, where these customs were well understood; yet I believe that he did get it from that source.

It seems that one Dr. Moses Younglove, who had been a prisoner among the "Tories," after his release swore to a deposition, in which he testified that his fellow-prisoners were cruelly tortured by the Indian allies of their captors, and several of them, *as he had reason to believe*, taken to an island in the lake and eaten. What is more likely than that this deposition was transmitted to Chatham by some of his Disunion admirers, and caused him to bring his preposterous charge against the Indians?

Page 63 (¹⁶), "Roman Catholics in Ireland."

"I hope, indeed, I never shall see an army of foreign auxiliaries in Great Britain. . . . With respect to Ireland, my lords, I am not of the same opinion. If a powerful foreign army were landed in that kingdom, with arms ready to be put into the hands of the Roman Catholics, I declare freely to your lordships that I should heartily wish it were possible to collect twenty thousand German Protestants, whether from Hesse, or Brunswick, or Wolfenbuttel, or even the unpopular Hanoverians, and land them in Ireland."—Speech of Lord Chatham on "Relations to Spain."

Page 62 (¹⁷), "the employment of aliens."

In public speeches, and by every underhand means, Chatham, Burke, Camden, Saville, Richmond, Rockingham, and other Whigs of as great or lesser note, endeavored, with great success, to prevent enlistments of Englishmen in the army and navy of their country. The subject will be referred to later.

Page 63 (¹⁸), "murder of at least one man."

I allude, of course, to the execution of Major Wirtz, at the close of the American Civil War, for the alleged crime of murdering Federal prisoners at Andersonville. The fact is that, though there was great suffering amongst the prisoners at that place, the fault was not in Wirtz; it was chiefly caused by the condition of the Confederacy, which had been so ravaged by the Northern armies that no sufficient provisions could be procured to feed either its prisoners or its own soldiers. And it is a strange fact that the mortality among the Confederate

NOTES

prisoners in the North was greater in proportion to their number than that among the Northern prisoners in the South, notwithstanding the great wealth and resources of the former.

Page 63 (¹⁹), "founding barbarity upon falsehood."

"Your prisoners, whose lives, by the law of the land, are destined to the cord, have hitherto been treated with care and kindness, and more comfortably lodged than the King's troops in the hospitals. . . . I understand there are of the King's faithful subjects, taken some time since by the rebels, laboring like negro slaves to gain their daily subsistence, or reduced to the wretched alternative to perish by famine or to take arms against their King and country. Those who have made the treatment of the prisoners in my hands, or of your other friends in Boston, a pretence for such measures, *found barbarity upon falsehood.*"—General Gage to Washington, August 13, 1775: Washington's *Writings*, Vol. III., p. 59. See, also, letter of Howe to Washington, April 21, 1777: Washington's *Writings*, Vol. IV., pp. 557, 558.

Page 63 (²⁰), "accused of tyranny and barbarity."

Ethan Allen, the favorite hero of the American schoolboy; the famous captor of the fortress of Ticonderoga, "in the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress," unkindly styled by Professor Tyler "a blustering frontier hero, . . . an able-minded ignoramus," and "a military windbag and braggart conqueror."

This gentleman wrote a "Narrative," wherein he details his experience as a prisoner in the hands of the barbarous British; how he bearded these cowardly minions of tyranny in their dens—or, rather, their "dungeons." Some parts of the story, certainly, are amusing, as where we behold him using a British officer as a shield against the attack of a couple of Indians, one of whom "advanced with more than mortal speed," with "malice, death, murder and the wrath of devils and damned spirits in his countenance." Against this terrible assault the hero had no defence except that afforded by an accommodating British subaltern, obligingly standing near, who at once was seized and made to "fly around with incredible velocity" to meet the changing points of attack made by his murderous assailants. It is to be hoped the officer had a clear head, otherwise his intellect must have been much confused by this experience as a human teetotum.

After a period of captivity in England, Allen was sent to New York, and there remained for some time, during which he seems to have been treated as a privileged merry-Andrew. Later he was exchanged, and visited the Revolutionary camp

NOTES

at Valley Forge, where Washington offered him a colonel's commission, but for some reason this was declined, or, rather, avoided, for, while it was being prepared, Allen folded his warlike tent, and silently stole away, and never after appeared at the scene of hostilities. From that day he ceased to be a terror to the British, and devoted his energies to politics in his own province. Of the intended treachery of Allen and his brother Ira, as well as the more open treason of his other brother, Levi, any one may be convinced who takes the trouble to consult the records.

Page 63 (²¹), "for the benefit of his party."

This was the celebrated Philip Freneau, the paid tool of Jefferson and the defamer of Washington, but, withal, a man of genius. Jefferson had written articles in the *National Gazette*, Freneau's journal, abusive of the administration of which he was a member and Washington the head. This fact becoming known or strongly suspected, Jefferson, ever timid, and inclined to hide behind others, prevailed upon Freneau to make affidavit that no word of the articles was written by him (Jefferson). Later, with supreme audacity, Freneau admitted that he had sworn falsely to shield his patron, and even pointed out several of the articles, every word of which, he declared, was from the pen of Jefferson. See McMaster's *History of the People of the United States*, Vol. II., pp. 52, 53.

Page 64 (²²), "had molested it in no way."

"If we should be obliged to abandon the town [New York], ought it to stand as winter quarters for the enemy? . . . At present, I dare say, the enemy means to preserve it if they can. If Congress, therefore, should resolve upon the destruction of it, the resolution should be a profound secret, as the knowledge of it will make a capital change in their plans."—Washington to the President of the Congress, September 2, 1776: Washington's *Writings*, Vol. IV., pp. 73, 74.

The Congress did not give its sanction to the burning of New York, and Washington withdrew therefrom without carrying out his intent.

Page 64 (²³), "his crime upon the scaffold."

The actual perpetrator of these attempts was one John Aitkin, or "John the Painter," a native of Scotland, a deserter and a thief. He was hired, or, at least, encouraged to commit the acts by Silas Deane, one of the American Commissioners at the Court of Versailles, the colleague of Franklin. Whether Franklin was privy to the plot can only be conjectured, but it seems certain that the Congress approved of it, since, after the complicity of Deane was sufficiently established, they did

NOTES

not withdraw from him their support, but retained him in their employ until it became evident that he was about to betray them to the British Government.

Of Aitkin, Chief Justice Oliver wrote: "This John ye Painter was a most finished villain in almost all crimes, as he confessed himself, and the Congress and their adherents could not have pitched upon a more proper person to have executed their diabolical purposes than upon this fellow; but, alas! how often are halters misplaced! Had they been tightened about the necks of some of his employers, neither the conflagration at Portsmouth nor in America had committed such horrid ravages as have wasted the lives and habitations of so many thousands."

See Aitkin's confession in Howell's *State Trials*, Vol. XX., p. 1365.

There is a hint of the supposed complicity of Franklin in the following letter from Lord Stormont to Lord Weymouth:

"Franklin affects to lie *perdue*, but that infamous incendiary, Deane, . . . is very frequent in his visits to Versailles." See Hales' *Franklin in France*, p. 429.

A further hint is contained in a sentence in a letter from Thomas Jefferson, written several years after the conclusion of peace, in which he expressed his willingness to pay sixty guineas "to cut out a single sentence" from the letter-book of Deane, containing "*evidence of a fact not proper to be committed to the hands of enemies.*"—Jefferson to Jay, March 12, 1789.

That Jefferson himself did not disapprove of such methods of warfare is shown by the fact that, during the succeeding war with Great Britain, he proposed to burn London, by means, not of one, but of many "John the Painters."—Jefferson to Colonel Duane, August 4, 1812: Jefferson's *Works* (Congress Edition), Vol. VI., pp. 75, 76. Jefferson to Jay, March 12, 1789: Randolph's *Jefferson*, Vol. II., p. 435.

CHAPTER IV.

Page 66 (¹), "deserters from the British ranks."

Washington to the President of Congress, July 10, 1775; Washington to General Schuyler, July 10, 1775; Washington's Order, November 12, 1775: Washington's *Writings*, Vol. III., pp. 24, 25, 30, 155.

Resolution of Congress offering bribes to deserters from the British army. See *Journals of Congress*, August 14 and 27, 1776.

NOTES

Page 67 (*), "can justify a different opinion."

Washington to Governor Cooke, December 5, 1775; Washington to the President of Congress, September 2, 1776; Washington to J. A. Washington, September 22, 1776; Washington to the President of Congress, September 24, 1776; Washington to General Schuyler, October 27, 1776; Washington to Governor Livingston, January 24, 1777; Washington to the President of Congress, September 15, 1780: Washington's *Writings*, Vol. III., p. 198; Vol. IV., pp. 72, 104, 114, 156, 296; Vol. VII., pp. 205, 206. Le Ch. Dubuysson to the Congress, September 2, 1780: *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, Vol. I., p. 421. Letter of General Greene: Force's *American Archives* (Fifth Series), Vol. II., p. 996. Gordon's *History of the American Revolution*, Vol. II., p. 32.

Page 68 (*), "the more highly trained troops of France."

Washington to Joseph Reed, January 31, 1776; Washington's Orderly Book, June 3, 1776; Washington to the President of Congress, September 2, 1776; Washington to the President of Congress, September 16, 1776; Washington to the President of Congress, September 24, 1776; Washington's Orderly Book, September 19, 1776; Washington's Proclamations of November 6, 1776, and of January 21, 1777, in which he severely censured the officers and men of the militia and continental troops, those "base and cowardly wretches," for "the infamous practice of plundering the inhabitants, under the specious pretence of their being Tories;" Washington to J. A. Washington, November 19, 1776; Washington to General Lincoln, April 27, 1777; Washington to General Greene, August 26, 1780: Washington's *Writings*, Vol. III., pp. 277, 372; Vol. IV., pp. 72, 94, 112, 114, 118, 119, 160, 184, 289, 290, 402; Vol. V., pp. 240, 402; Vol. VII., p. 166. General Varnum to General Greene: Washington's *Writings*, Vol. V., p. 240.

Of the retreat of the two brigades, Colonel Smallwood, in his report to the Maryland Convention, wrote: "I have often read and heard of instances of cowardice, but hitherto have had but a faint idea of it; till now I never could have thought human nature subject to such baseness. I could wish the transactions of this day blotted out of the annals of America. Nothing but fright, disgrace and confusion. Let it suffice to say that sixty light infantry, upon the first fire, put to flight two brigades of Connecticut troops—wretches who, however strange it may appear, from the Brigadier-General down to the private sentinel, were caned and whipped by Generals Washington, Putnam and Mifflin, but even this indignity had no weight, they could not be brought to stand one shot."

NOTES

In a letter upon the same subject to Governor Cooke, General Greene wrote: "We made a miserable, disorderly retreat from New York, owing to the disorderly conduct of the militia, who ran at the appearance of the enemy's advance guard; this was General Fellows's brigade. They struck a panic into the troops in the rear, and Fellows's and Parsons's whole brigade ran away from about fifty men, and left his Excellency on the ground within eighty yards of the enemy, so vexed at the infamous conduct of the troops that he sought death rather than life."—Force's *American Archives* (Fifth Series), Vol. II., pp. 370, 1013.

The incident is described in Gordon's *History*, Vol. II., p. 327; Ramsay's *History of the American Revolution*, Vol. I., pp. 306, 307; and in Graydon's *Memoirs*, p. 174.

All the accounts show that Washington was enraged almost to madness by the pusillanimous conduct of his troops. The next day, however, on the occasion of an attack on their advanced post, the American troops behaved so much better as to cause great elation both to Washington and Greene, the latter exultantly declaring that, "They [the British] met with a very different kind of reception from what they did the day before."

Page 69 (4), "profitable doctrine of *ubi bene, ibi patria.*"

Speaking from the fulness of his experience, said Gouverneur Morris, in the Constitutional Convention: "The men who can shake off their attachment to their own country can never love any other."—Elliott's *Debates*, Vol. V., p. 400.

The many native-born Britons who fought on the side of the Revolution, though now counted among its heroes, doubtless were estimated by such men as Washington and Morris at their true value, that of hirelings.

Page 71 (5), "contrary to orders, persuasions and threats."

Washington to Governor Dinwiddie, August 20, 1754; Washington to Governor Dinwiddie, October 11, 1755; Washington to Governor Dinwiddie, August 4, 1756; Washington to Governor Dinwiddie, November 9, 1756; Washington to Governor Dinwiddie, September 17, 1757; Washington to Brigadier-General Stanwix, April 19, 1758: Washington's *Writings*, Vol. II., pp. 62, 63, 104, 105, 167, 195, 250, 276.

Page 74 (6), "preyed upon British commerce in European seas."

According to a report made to the House of Lords, during

NOTES

the eighteen months ending the 31st of December, 1777, seven hundred and thirty-three British merchant vessels were captured by privateers sailing under commissions from the Continental Congress.

Page 74 (7), "‘winked at’ by the Government of that country."

"The fitting out may be covered and concealed by various pretences, so, at least, to be *winked at* by the Government here."—Franklin and Deane to the Committee of Foreign Affairs, May 25, 1777: *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, Vol. II., p. 322.

"This Court [of France] continues the same conduct that it has held ever since our arrival. It professes to England to observe all treaties. . . . To us it privately professes a real friendship, wishes success to our cause, *winks at the supplies we obtain here* as much as it can without giving open grounds of complaint to England, privately offers us very essential aids."—Franklin, Deane and Lee to the Committee of Foreign Affairs, September 8, 1777: *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, Vol. II., pp. 388, 389.

Page 74 (8), "almost every nativity except American."

Of one of these privateers, Diego Gardoqui, a Spanish merchant of Bilboa, an agent for the American Commissioners at Paris, wrote: "There are rumors that he is not properly an American privateer, being manned by French adventurers, who, with their commander, have acted contrary to the law of nations."—Gardoqui to A. Lee, September 28, 1778: *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, Vol. II., p. 750.

Page 74 (9), "French, Americans and English."

"It would give us satisfaction to annoy our enemies by granting a letter of marque, as is desired, for a vessel fitting out at Dunkirk, and, as is supposed by us, containing a mixed crew of French, Americans and English."—Franklin, Lee and Adams to de Sartine, June 3, 1778: *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, Vol. II., p. 604.

Page 75 (10), "a ‘fresh supply’ was requested."

"The rage, as I may say, for entering into the American service increases . . . in the sea as well as land service. Blank commissions are wanted here to cruise under your flag against British Commerce." "If Congress approves of my continuing to issue such commissions, I wish to have a fresh

NOTES

supply."—Deane to the Committee of Secret Correspondence, November 6, 1776; Deane to John Jay, December 3, 1776; Franklin to the President of Congress, October 4, 1779.

"Congress approve of armed vessels being fitted out by you [Franklin, Deane and Lee] on Continental account; . . . blank commissions for this purpose will be sent you by the next opportunity."—Committee of Secret Correspondence to Franklin, Deane and Lee, December 21, 1776: *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, Vol. II., pp. 191, 213, 231; Vol. III., p. 364.

Page 75 (¹¹), "in the regular warships."

"The *Prince de Nassau* will make the cruise with you. She is to be brought here under cover as a French merchantman, *to be equipped and manned in France*. You have your present crew, to be made up here with other nations and French."—Franklin to J. P. Jones, June 1, 1778: Franklin's *Writings*, Vol. VIII., p. 274.

But Jones replied that his American crew were "homesick," and Franklin wrote him:

"It is now settled . . . that you are to have the frigate from Holland, which actually belongs to Government [of France], and will be furnished with as many good French seamen as you shall require. . . . As you may like to have a number of Americans, and your own are homesick, it is proposed to give you as many as you can engage out of the two hundred prisoners which the ministry of Britain have at length agreed to give us in exchange for those you have in your hands. . . . If by this means you can get a good new crew, I think it will be best that you are quite free of the old, for a mixture might introduce the infection of that sickness you complain of."—Franklin to J. P. Jones, June 10, 1778: Franklin's *Writings*, Vol. VIII., pp. 275, 276.

However, Jones got but few of the two hundred prisoners, the American nativity of many of which, it may be said, was at least doubtful.

Page 76 (¹²), "than the regular crew."

Cooper's *History of the United States Navy*.

The vessel referred to by Mr. Cooper was the renowned *Bon Homme Richard*, commanded by the no less renowned John Paul Jones, about which ship and man there has been evolved a minor myth peculiar to themselves. The victory they achieved, lauded as a marvellous example of American skill and daring, in fact gives little cause for wonder, and in no sense was American.

NOTES

It was not an example of great skill and daring, because it was achieved over an enemy of weaker force. It was not an American victory, because the ships of the squadron that achieved it, not only were not manned or officered by Americans, but Jones, their commander, himself an unexpatriated British subject, was acting under a French commission. Moreover, the squadron failed in its mission, inasmuch as the object for which it was dispatched was not attained. All these facts, besides being of record in the French archives, are attested by Franklin and Jones himself.

The squadron commanded by Jones, according to the account given by De Chaumont, consisted of the *Bon Homme Richard*, 42 guns; the *Alliance*, 36 guns; the *Pallas*, 30 guns, the *Cerf*, 18 guns, and the *Vengeance*, 12 guns; in all, a squadron of 138 guns. Jones gives a similar account, except that he gives the number of guns carried by the *Bon Homme Richard* as forty, instead of forty-two guns, and says that the *Cerf* separated from him. He also gives the tonnage of the two British ships, the *Serapis* and the *Countess of Scarborough*, as a forty-four-gun ship and a twenty-gun ship, which is the same weight of metal as given by Franklin. Taking Jones' account as the true one, his squadron, carrying 118 guns, engaged with one carrying 64 guns.

See *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, Vol. III., pp. 309, 365, 376, 380; Vol. IV., p. 301.

Page 81 (¹⁸), "the needed aid must be afforded."

John Laurens, Memorial to Count de Vergennes, March 20, 1781: *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, Vol. IV., pp. 318-321.

Vergennes wrote to the French ambassador at Madrid, in part, as follows: "C'est gratuitement qu'on voit dans le peuple nouveau une race de conquérants. . . . Malgré le grand attachement que le peuple et même les chefs témoignent pour leur indépendance, je souhaite que leur constance ne les abandonne pas avant qu'ils en aient obtenu la reconnaissance. Je commence à n'avoir plus une si grande opinion de leur fermeté, parce que celle s'affaiblit à mesure que je m'éclaire. Leur république, s'ils corrigeant pas les vices, ce qui me paraît très difficile . . . ne serait jamais qu'un corps faible et susceptible de bien peu activité. Si les Anglais en avaient mis davantage, ce colosse apparent serait actuellement plus soumis qu'il ne l'avait jamais été. Dieu fasse que cela n'arrive pas encore. Je vous avoue que je n'ai qu'une faible confiance dans l'énergie des États-Unis."—Circourt, *Histoire de l'Action Commune*, etc., Vol. III., pp. 312-314.

NOTES

Page 84 (¹⁴), "the worst was already over."

Gouverneur Morris, pp. 119, 49.

Edward Everett, more candid or less patriotic than Mr. Roosevelt, admits that "The alliance [with France] saved the United States."—*North American Review*, Vol. XXXIII., p. 450.

Page 87 (¹⁵), "skilfully fostered by Franklin."

Doniol declares that Franklin and his colleagues did their utmost to stimulate the belief that the revolted colonies were on the eve of a reconciliation with the mother country, a result that would be fatal to France, and which could be averted only by a speedy alliance.—*Histoire, etc.*, Vol. II., p. 393.

Page 88 (¹⁶), "in the revolted colonies."

These numbers I have estimated from British sources of information. John Adams, who, as chief of the Board of War, should have been informed in the matter, made a somewhat similar estimate: "Fifty thousand men upon paper, and thirty thousand men, in fact," he declared, "was the highest number Britain ever had in arms against this country."—John Adams to the Inhabitants of Concord, July, 1798: *Works*, Vol. IX., p. 211.

CHAPTER V.

Page 89 (¹), "Philanthropic Treason."

"The philanthropist who wishes good to his own country and of mankind must be the bulrush bending to the storm, and not the sturdy oak unavailingly resisting."—Hartley to Franklin, May 1, 1782: Franklin's *Works*, Vol. IX., p. 218.

This Hartley, the most persistent if not the most eminent of the "friends of America," was ever employed in devising schemes to frustrate the attempts of the ministry to maintain or regain control of the colonies. In the letter from which the above is quoted, he declared: "My object and wish always has been to strike at the root of the evil, the American War." This has little the appearance of bending to the storm; in fact, Hartley, like all of the other "friends of America," and like many Englishmen born since his time, applied the doctrine of non-resistance only to the case of his countrymen when attacked by other peoples. For these other peoples resistance

NOTES

was lawful and laudable, and if it were made against the just claims of his country, it was lawful and laudable for Englishmen to aid it.

Page 89 (*), "a 'fatal yielding' on the part of the colonists."

"I have conversed with almost all ranks of people. . . . The following language has been reiterated to me in various companies, with approbation and warmth: 'We are afraid of nothing but your division and your want of perseverance. Unite and persevere. You must prevail; you must triumph.'

Before I came among this people, the friends of liberty desponded, because they believed the Americans would give up. They saw the irretrievable ruin of the whole cause, lost in that fatal yielding."—Josiah Quincy, Jr., to Mrs. Quincy, Nov. 24, 1774: *Life of Josiah Quincy, Jr.*

But these self-styled philanthropists did not always have credit for unselfishness from those who benefited by their acts. William S. Johnson, agent for the province of Connecticut, in a letter to his constituents, wrote of one of Burke's speeches: "It is plain enough that these motions have not been made for the sake of the colonies, but merely to serve the purposes of the Opposition, to render the ministry, if possible, more odious, so that they may themselves come into the conduct of affairs, while it remains very doubtful whether they would do much better, if at all, than their predecessors."—*Collections of Massachusetts Historical Society*, Vol. XLIX. "Life of W. S. Johnson."

That Johnson was justified in his statement, at least as applied to the majority of the Whig agitators, there can be no doubt. The length to which party animosity was carried by the chiefs of that party and their supporters presents a repulsive picture. Horace Walpole, though not an active politician, exhibited these malevolent sentiments to the full extent; for he had never forgiven the overthrow of the powerful oligarchy that his father had set up, and vented his spleen on all who supported the party which had succeeded it in power. His frequent references to these men are so gross and silly that it is difficult to determine whether they were inspired by treason, malice or folly. See Cunningham's *Walpole*, pp. 7, 14, 32, 65, *passim*.

"All the stories of Horace Walpole," says Mahon, "are to be received with great caution, but his *Reminiscences*, above all, written in his dotage, teem with the grossest inaccuracies and most incredible assertions."—*History of England, from the Peace of Utrecht to the Peace of Paris*, Vol. I., p. 356.

NOTES

Page 90 (³), "loyalty to their king and country."

"I do not call for vengeance on the heads of those who have been guilty. I only recommend them to make their retreat. Let them walk off; and let them make haste, *or they may be assured that speedy and condign punishment will overtake them.*"—Speech of Chatham in the House of Lords, November 18, 1777.

"Peace and freedom, justice to the injured, *and exemplary punishment on the heads of the guilty* [that is, the ministers and their supporters] ought constantly to be in the view of every honest man."—William Baker to Burke, October 27, 1777: Burke's *Works*, Vol. I., p. 352.

Page 92 (⁴), "made a subject for their rejoicing."

When a report of Howe's victory over Washington's army on Long Island reached London, Fox deplored it as that "terrible news from Brooklyn." The success of Burgoyne at Ticonderoga Sir George Seville declared to be "ruinous."

Page 92 (⁵), "to 'clog' the war."

"A minority cannot make or carry on a war; but a minority, well-composed and acting steadily, *may clog a war* in such a manner as to make it not very easy to proceed."—Burke to Rockingham, August 23, 1775: Burke's *Works*, Vol. I., p. 285.

Page 92 (⁶), "upon their country and countrymen."

James Parton, in his *Life and Times of Benjamin Franklin*, says: "The interests of America and the interests of that Opposition were identical. . . . The strange spectacle was then afforded of the most eminent British statesmen associating with and entertaining in their homes a commissioned emissary of their King's revolted subjects, the King's own son and heir not disdaining his society."

The emissary referred to by Mr. Parton was one Jonathan Austin, a Disunion spy, sent by Franklin to London to obtain information from his English friends to be used in the intended destruction of their country. Another notorious Disunion spy was Edward Bancroft, who, by Franklin's directions, travelled frequently from Paris to London, and there held conferences with the "friends of America," among them Lord Chancellor Camden. It was this man who gave information to Paul Jones that enabled him to make attacks on unprotected British ports and shipping. Bancroft was never molested by the British authorities, though his occupation was well known to them. After the close of the Revolutionary War he remained in Eng-

NOTES

land, and lived to play the spy in the interests of the French Republic during the subsequent war with France.

Page 94 (7), "her decadence and her crimes."

"It is not possible for him to express the sense he has of the honor which this resolution does him. . . . He looks to the American States as *now* the hope, and likely *soon* to become the refuge, of mankind."—Price to Franklin, January 18, 1779: *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, Vol. II., p. 474.

"So flattering a testimony of the regard of an assembly which I consider the most respectable and important in the world cannot but give me the highest pleasure, and I shall always reckon it among the first honors of my life. . . . Here our debts must soon produce a shocking catastrophe."—Price to Arthur Lee, January 18, 1779: *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, Vol. III., p. 28.

Page 96 (8), "never could be subdued by force of arms."

Sir William Howe, his brother Richard, Lord Howe, and Lord Barrington.

In the London *Chronicle* for August 14, 1779, was published a mock epitaph of Sir William Howe, which contains less exaggeration than do most epitaphs: "A boundless rapacity allured him to so atrocious a system of refined and deliberate treachery, ever dreading the glory of victory and conquest as tending to shorten the period of the war, and to withdraw him from the embezzlement of the public treasure. Thus a parricide to his country, he was moreover distinguished in the features of his private character, for the uniform dissoluteness of his conduct demonstrated his degradation."

Earl Percy declared that Howe and his officers interested themselves "more about the fate of a French dancer than the fate of this country."—Intercepted Letter in United States Department of State.

Page 96 (9), "were best subdued by proclamation."

"A different set of politics prevailed," wrote a New York Loyalist on the coming of Howe and his army to New York; "the rebels were to be converted, and the Loyalists frowned upon: *proclamations were to end an inveterate rebellion*. An Opposition, a most unprincipled Opposition, in England was to be pleased."—Thomas Jones, *History of New York*, Vol. II., p. 21.

NOTES

CHAPTER VI.

Page 99 (¹), "to cheat the law and get money."

In a letter to the Earl of Egmont, President of the Trustees of the Province of Georgia, Colonel Byrd wrote: "With respect to Rum, *the Saints of New England*, I fear, will find some trick to evade your act of Parliament [forbidding the establishment of slavery and the introduction of alcoholic liquors into the colony]. *They have a great dexterity in palliating a perjury* so well as to leave no taste of it in the mouth; nor can any people like them slip through a penal statute. . . . *A watchful eye must be kept on these foul traders.*"—*American Historical Review*, Vol. I., p. 88.

Page 100 (²), "of his fellow provincials."

Of his neighbors, the North Carolinians, Colonel Byrd wrote: "*They pay no tribute either to God or Caesar.*" They "live in a climate where no clergyman can breathe any more than spiders in Ireland. . . . What little devotion there may happen to be is much more private than their vices."—*The Westover Manuscript*: *Cyclopædia of American Literature*, Vol. I., p. 75.

Page 101 (³), "only to be expressed by a metaphor."

Le Clerc Milfort, in his *Mémoires, ou Coup d'Oeil Rapide*, describes the contests of these "gougers." A ring was formed, he tells us, the oldest man present being appointed umpire. The contestants, whose thumbnails had been allowed to grow long, and were artificially hardened, were besides armed with an iron spike. As soon as the word was given, they flew at each other, bit, clawed and gashed. When one had been thrown down, he was jumped upon by his opponent, who with his thumbnail gouged out his eye. When this was done, the umpire gave the signal to desist, but often too late to save the remaining eye of the prostrate man. The victor then leaped upon a stump and defied mankind to combat.

See, also, Chastellux' *Voyage dans l'Amérique Septentrionale*, Vol. II., pp. 192, 193.

Page 102 (⁴), "deserting it in its hour of danger."

Washington to General Schuyler, July 28, 1775; to the President of Congress, August 7, 1775; to the President of Congress, August 8, 1775; to the President of Congress, September 21, 1775; to Joseph Reed, November 8, 1775; to the President of Congress, November 28, 1775: Washington's *Writings*, Vol. III., pp. 42, 55, 56, 104, 157.

NOTES

Page 105 (6), "a total dissolution of the army."

Washington to Governor Trumbull, December 2, 1775; to Governor Cooke, December 5, 1775; to Joseph Reed, January 4, 1776; Schuyler to Washington, December 5, 1775; Washington to Governor Trumbull, November 10, 1776; to the President of Congress, March 14, 1777; to the Governor of Maryland, April 12, 1777; to R. H. Lee, October 17, 1777; to the President of Congress, December 23, 1777; to the President of Congress, April 30, 1778; to John Banister, April 21, 1778; to Gouverneur Morris, April 25, 1778; to R. H. Lee, June 1, 1777; to Gouverneur Morris, May 8, 1779; to the President of Congress, June 27, 1779: Washington's *Writings*, Vol. III., pp. 183, 188, 191, 225; Vol. IV., pp. 171, 363, 386, 447; Vol. V., pp. 98, 99, 201, 321, 339, 340, 350; Vol. VI., pp. 243, 251.

After a perusal of these angry complaints, the comment of an English historian that Washington "had never ceased to be serene and self-assured" has an odd sound. See Mahon's *History of England*, Vol. VI., p. 135.

Page 109 (6), "official positions of trust and honor."

"We have a miserable prejudice against men of education in this State," wrote J. D. Sergeant to John Adams, a few days after the Declaration of Independence; "most of them [the members of the New Jersey Convention] hardly competent to penning a common note."—John Adams' *Works*, Vol. IX., p. 425.

Noah Webster, in his *Essays* (p. 338), says that three-fifths of the names of the constituents of a Maryland representative appended to a copy of instructions were marked with a cross because the men could not write.

It is a well-attested fact that many of the justices of the peace of the Province and State of New York, and of other provinces and states, at that time considered a far higher office than at present, were obliged to attest their judgments with their marks. See *Documents Relating to the Colonial History of New York*, Vol. VII., p. 979.

Page 118 (7), "among the members of the Congress."

This was the famous "Conway Cabal," led by an Irish officer, which very nearly resulted in displacing Washington as the head of the army and substituting Horatio Gates, reputed the bastard son of the Duke of Leeds. This man, like Montgomery and other English officers serving in the Revolutionary War, left the British service because he was not advanced to a rank that he aspired to.

NOTES

Page 119 (⁸), "in the Second Continental Congress."

Asserted by the biographers of John Jay on the authority of a "family tradition."

This was the second Congress. This is what John Adams said of the first: "I went to Congress in 1774. . . . I had the disappointment to find . . . the greatest part even of the most intelligent full of prejudice and jealousies, which I had never before even suspected."—John Adams to James Lloyd, January, 1815: *Works*, Vol. X., p. 110.

Page 119 (⁹), "in the English army than in ours."

Mr. Mason, of Virginia, was of a different opinion. Speaking in that State Convention, in 1788, he said: "Bribery and corruption, in my opinion, will be practised in America more than in England, in the proportion as five hundred and fifty exceeds sixty-five." The remarkable exactness of this estimate arose from the fact that Mr. Mason was basing it upon the number of representatives in Parliament and in Congress.

CHAPTER VII.

Page 120 (¹), "in accordance with their despotic commands."

A long, though very imperfect, list of these outrages is given by Lorenzo Sabine in his *Biographical Sketches of Loyalists*. Sabine was an enthusiastic adherent of the cause of the Revolution, and an honest and impartial writer, who, as he says, had "devoted years to the subject."

Page 122 (²), "pronounce sentence and do execution."

"Committees not known in law . . . frequently elect themselves into a tribunal, where the same persons are at once legislators, accusers, witnesses, judges and jurors, and the mob the executioners. The accused has no day in court, and the execution of the sentence is the first notice he receives."—*Massachusettensis' Letters*, Letter IV.

Page 122 (³), "elected . . . as a deliberative assembly."

And how elected? In one county in New York, the delegate to the Congress was elected by less than half a dozen people. (See *Revolutionary Incidents*, Onderdonk, p. 16.) Silas Deane is said to have nominated and elected himself. In Galloway's

NOTES

Examination (p. 11), it is said: "In no colony where delegates were not appointed by the assemblies, which were four only, were they chosen by one-twentieth part of the people."

Page 122 (*), "and cross-examining the inmates."

Of these inquisitions, the indomitable "Westchester Farmer" wrote: "Will you submit to this slavish regulation? . . . Will you be instrumental in bringing this abject slavery on yourselves? . . . Do as you please; but by Him that made me, I will not. . . . Choose your committee, or suffer it to be chosen by half a dozen fools in your neighborhood; open your doors to them, let them examine your tea-canisters and molasses jugs, and your wives' and daughters' petticoats; bow and cringe, and tremble and quake; fall down and worship our Sovereign Lord the Mob! But, I repeat it, by Heaven, I will not! No, my house is my castle; as such I will consider it, as such I will defend it while I have breath." —Samuel Seabury, *Free Thoughts on the Proceedings of the Continental Congress.*"

Page 126 (*), "the miseries of its inmates."

In Moore's *Diary* (Vol. II., p. 435) is contained a description given by a Loyalist of his descent into this "Hell," and of the wretched prisoners incarcerated therein, half-stifled by the fetid air of the place.

Page 127 (*), "twenty-seven such 'executions.' "

There is related by Sabine a most revolting story of one of these lawless hangings, perpetrated by the Revolutionary hero, General Putnam. It is as follows:

"Jones, Edward, of Ridgefield, Connecticut. Was executed by General Putnam, in 1779, at a place called Gallows Hill. The scene is described as shocking. 'The man on whom the duty of hangman devolved left the camp, and on the day of execution could not be found. A couple of boys about the age of twelve years were ordered by General Putnam to perform the duties of the absconding hangman. The gallows was about twenty feet from the ground. Jones was compelled to ascend the ladder, and the rope around his neck was attached to the cross-beam. Putnam then ordered Jones to jump from the ladder. "No, General Putnam," said Jones, "I am innocent of the crime laid to my charge; I shall not do it." Putnam then ordered the boys before mentioned to turn the ladder over. The boys were deeply affected with the trying scene; they cried and sobbed loudly, and earnestly entreated to be excused from doing anything on this distressing occasion.

NOTES

Putnam, drawing his sword, ordered them forward and compelled them at the sword's point to obey his order.'”—*Biographical Sketches*, p. 406.

Page 129 (7), “with our enemy in this contest.”

“The family of Johnson, the black part of it as well as the white [that is, Sir William and Colonel Guy Johnson, their Highland guard and the Indians under their protection], are pretty well thinned. *They deserve extermination.*”—John Adams to Abigail Adams, August 19, 1777: *Familiar Letters*, p. 292.

“What sort of magistrates do you intend to make? Will your new legislature feel bold or irresolute? *Will your judicial hang and whip without scruple?*—John Adams to General Warren, July 27, 1775: *Works*, Vol. I., p. 180.

“I think their [the Loyalists’] career might have been stopped on your side [that is, in the colonies; Adams was writing from Amsterdam] if the executive officers had not been too timid in a point which I so strenuously recommended at first; *namely, to fine, imprison and hang all inimical to the cause without favor or affection.* I foresaw the evil that would arise from that quarter, and wished to have timely stopped it. *I would have hanged my own brother if he had took a part with our enemy in this contest.*”—Adams to Cushing, December 15, 1780: *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, Vol. IV., p. 195.

The atrocity of the sentiments expressed in the letter last cited have produced attempts to discredit its authenticity, but without avail.

CHAPTER VIII.

Page 133 (7), “‘concealed the treason.’”

“It is now universally admitted [among the members of the Congress] that we are and must be independent,” wrote John Adams; “but objections are made to a declaration of it. It is said that such a declaration will arouse and unite Great Britain. . . . That such a declaration will put us in the power of foreign states.”—John Adams to John Winthrop, June 23, 1776: *Works*, Vol. IX., p. 409.

“We often read resolves denying the authority of Parliament . . . gilded over with professions of loyalty to the King; but the golden leaf is too thin to conceal the treason.”—*Massachusettensis’ Letters*, p. 114.

NOTES

Page 135 (3), "cared a farthing for."

"I never was much of John Bull, I was Yankee, and such I shall live and die."—John Adams to Warren, August 4, 1778: *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, Vol. II., p. 676.

"Neither my father nor mother, grandfather nor grandmother, great-grandfather nor great-grandmother, nor has any other relative that I know of or care a farthing for, been in England these hundred and fifty years."—John Adams' Diary: *Works*, Vol. III., p. 392.

Page 137 (4), "to sit among the rulers of empire."

This fact is denied or ignored by American writers generally. De Witt, however, in his *Life of Jefferson*, admits it. Referring to Franklin, when in England, he writes: "There was a moment when there was even a question of appointing him Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, then filled by Lord Hillsborough, and he showed himself quite ready to accept this post, conformable to his triple maxim, 'never to ask a place, never to refuse a place, and never to resign one.'"—*Life of Thomas Jefferson*, p. 59.

The "triple maxim" referred to by Mr. De Witt occurs in a letter from Franklin to his sister, Jane Mecom, written in December, 1770, and published by Sparks. There is also published by Sparks a letter from Franklin to his son, written in July, 1768, in which he relates a qualified tender of office from Lord North, and his own virtual acceptance thereof. In the same volume in which this letter appears, Sparks asserts that "there never was a shadow of a foundation" for the report, by his enemies, that Franklin "was disposed to accept office under the British Government." Had the office been bestowed upon him the world would never have heard of Benjamin Franklin as a Father of the American Revolution.

Page 139 (4), "only until they ripened."

See Guizot's *History of France*, Vol. V., p. 355.

In February, 1768, De Kalb, Choiseul's secret agent in the colonies, wrote to his chief: "All classes of people here are imbued with such a spirit of independence and freedom from control that, if all the provinces can be united under a common representation, an independent state will soon be formed. At all events it will certainly come forth in time."—Kapp's *Life of John Kalb*.

NOTES

Page 142 (6), "renouncing their allegiance to the Crown."

"The condition of the colonie [New England] was such that they were able to contest with all other plantations about them, and there was feare of their breaking from all dependence on this Nation. . . . We understood they were a people almost on the very brink of renouncing any dependence on the crowne."—*Diary of John Evelyn*, for May 26 and June 6, 1671.

Page 144 (6), "at the time of the annexation of Canada."

George Chalmers, for more than forty years Secretary of the Board of Trade, in the preface to his *Opinions of Eminent Lawyers*, published in 1814, wrote: "None of the statesmen of that period [1766], nor those of the preceding or subsequent times, had any suspicion that there lay among the documents of the Board of Trade and Paper Office the most satisfactory proofs, from the epoch of the revolution in 1688, throughout every reign and during every administration, of the settled purpose of the revolted provinces to acquire direct independence."

See, also, Chalmers' *Introduction to the Revolt of the American Colonies*. Chalmers quotes many documents.

Page 147 (7), "a single unimportant instance."

Unimportant only as a factor in the argument. This was the miserably conducted expedition to Cartagena, so graphically and pitilessly described by Tobias Smollett in his novel of *Roderick Random*. Smollett was present as a surgeon in one of the warships. In this expedition Lawrence Washington, brother of George, served under the command of Admiral Vernon ("Old Grogram," who gave the word "grog" to our mother tongue), of whom he seems to have been a great admirer, and from whom he named his estate "Mount Vernon," afterwards the home of the first President of the United States.

CHAPTER IX.

Page 149 (7), "after all hope of subduing them had departed."

{ Even Lecky joins the general chorus of condemnation of George III.: "It may be said, without exaggeration, that he inflicted more profound and enduring injuries upon his country than any other modern English King. . . . He espoused

NOTES

with passionate eagerness the American quarrel; resisted obstinately the measures of conciliation, by which at one time it might easily have been stilled," he writes.—*History of England*, Vol. III., pp. 170, 171.

Page 149 (³), "so as to give satisfaction."

Conway to Lord Hartford, February 12, 1776.

In Albemarle's *Life of Rockingham* (p. 292), it is said that the King gave to that minister a written declaration that he favored the amendment of the Stamp Act, but if it could not be amended then he would not oppose its repeal.

Page 151 (¹), "that assured to them their liberties."

This pretence was carried over the verge of absurdity. The Disunion petitions, resolutions and manifestoes abound in assertions and claims, direct and implied, that, had they been well founded, would have made King George—in theory, at least—the most despotic ruler that Great Britain had ever seen since the days of Oliver Cromwell after the dismissal of the Long Parliament.

CHAPTER X.

Page 154 (¹), "by underhand politicians."

"The Germans hated France and England, too, but had been taught to hate New England more than either, and to abhor taxes more than all. *A universal and perpetual exemption from taxes was held up to them as a temptation by underhand politicians.*"—John Adams to James Lloyd, February 14, 1815: *Works*, Vol. X., p. 120.

Page 155 (³), "swept from the face of the earth."

"Shays' Rebellion," the organizer and leader of which was one Daniel Shays, theretofore a captain in the Revolutionary army. See George R. Minot's *History of the Insurrection in Massachusetts*.

Page 157 (³), "the consent of the governed."

"I know, Sir," said Mr. Ames, in the Massachusetts Convention, "that the people talk about the liberty of nature. We cannot live without society; and as to liberty, how can I be said to enjoy that which another man may take from me when he pleases? The liberty of one depends not so much on the

NOTES

removal of all restraint from him as on the due restraint upon the liberty of others. Without such restraint there can be no liberty."—Elliott's *Debates*, Vol. II., p. 9.

Page 162 (4), "the national legislature."

A short time ago, that eminent educator, President Hadley, of Yale University, in a lecture to the students of the Berlin University, asserted that the framers of the American Federal Constitution "were not thinking of the legal position of private property. But it so happened that in making mutual limitations upon the powers of the federal constitution and the state governments, they unwittingly incorporated into the Constitution itself certain very extraordinary immunities to the property holders as a body." Thus are the facts of American history spread abroad.

Page 163 (5), "to which he has not consented."

"There are but two sorts of men in the world, freemen and slaves. The very definition of a freeman is one who is bound by no law to which he has not consented."—"Novanglus": *Works*, Vol. IV., p. 28.

Page 163 (6), "or other equivalent property."

"All the (male) inhabitants of the Commonwealth [Massachusetts], having sufficient qualifications, . . . every male person, being twenty-one years of age, . . . having a freehold estate within the same town, of an annual income of three pounds, or other estate of the value of sixty pounds, shall have a right to vote."—Report on a Constitution for Massachusetts made to the Convention, in 1779, by John Adams: *Works*, Vol. IV., pp. 219, 243.

Page 164 (7), "success will sanctify every operation."

During the war for independence, the people of Vermont, or the New Hampshire Grants, became so impressed by the teachings of the Disunion leaders about the right of self-government that they proposed to set up a government of their own. To this the Disunion government of New York, that claimed jurisdiction over that territory, objected, not relishing the idea of that doctrine being used to their disadvantage; therefore, they proposed to suppress that revolution by force of arms. To the head of that government Gouverneur Morris wrote: "Either let these people alone or conquer them. I prefer the latter, but I doubt the means. If we have the means, let them be used. . . . Success will sanctify every operation."—Sparks's *Life of Gouverneur Morris*."

NOTES

CHAPTER XI.

Page 166 (¹), "at no man's commandment living."

But it should not be supposed that with Hooker first arose in England the doctrine of government by the consent of the governed. A century and a quarter before Hooker wrote, Sir John Fortescue, Chief Justice of England during the reign of Henry VI., in his *De Laudibus Legum Angliae*, and in his *The Difference between Absolute and Limited Monarchy*, not only announced the doctrine, but declared its establishment in the "*dominium politicum et regale*" of the realm, "*in which the sovereign may not rule his people by other laws than such as they assent to.*" "*In the body politic,*" he writes, "*the first thing which lives and moves is the intention of the people.* . . . Neither can a king, who is the head of the body politic, change the laws thereof, nor take from the people what is theirs by right without their consent. . . . For he is appointed to protect his subjects in their lives, properties and laws; *for this very end and purpose he has the delegation of power from the people.*"

These words were written by a Chancellor of England just three centuries before the writing of the Declaration of Independence by a statesman of America, yet its insertion in that document would not in the least impair the symmetry of its theories and affirmations.

Page 170 (²), "on a strict question of principle."

Every encroachment, great or small, is important enough to awaken the attention of those who are entrusted with the preservation of a constitutional government. We are not to wait till great public mischiefs come, till the government is overthrown. We should not be worthy sons of our fathers were we so to regard great questions affecting the general freedom. *Those fathers accomplished the Revolution on a strict question of principle.*"—Speech of Daniel Webster in the United States Senate, May 7, 1834.

But we must not expect consistency, even from Daniel Webster. More than thirteen years before making this statement he had himself refuted it. In December, 1820, he had said: "Our own immortal Revolution was undertaken, not to shake or plunder property, but to protect it. The acts of which the country complained were such as violated the rights of property."

Page 170 (³), "and trial without jury."

Said Mr. Madison, in the Virginia Convention, in 1788: "The trial by jury is held as sacred in England as in America.

NOTES

There are deviations from it in England; yet greater deviations have happened here since we established our independence than have taken place there for a long time."

And Mr. Wilson, in the Pennsylvania Convention in the same year, said: "There have been more violations of this right in Pennsylvania since the Revolution than are to be found in England in the course of a century."—Elliott's *Debates*, Vol. II., p. 490; Vol. III., p. 537.

CHAPTER XII.

Page 177 (¹), "as a 'faction.' "

In an address to the younger Pitt: "I hope you will, in the end, bear down and conquer the hydra of faction, which now rears its hundred heads against you." These hydra heads were on the shoulders of those who formerly were the colleagues and followers of Wilkes.

Page 183 (²), "with as much ease as a lord."

Dr. Campbell, an Irish clergyman, in his *Diary of a Visit to England in 1775*, tells of his visit to the Chapter Coffee House, a place of resort frequented by men of culture and condition. "Here," says Dr. Campbell, "I saw a specimen of English freedom. A whitesmith, in his apron, and some of his saws under his arm, came in, sat down, and called for his glass of punch and the paper, both which he used with as much ease as a lord."

Page 184 (³), "because 'we pays you.' "

In his *Covent Garden Journal*, Henry Fielding pictures an independent carter, "who comforts himself that he is a free Englishman," and "though he was never worth twenty shillings in his life, is ready to answer a captain, if he offends him, 'D—n you, Sir! who are you? Is it not ~~we~~ that pays you?'"

CHAPTER XIII.

Page 198 (¹), "from some savage chief of that country."

For generations before the Revolution, the town of Boston, and other seaports of the New England provinces, had depended

NOTES

for their chief source of subsistence on three forms of industry—deep-sea fishing, distilling and slave-trading. These industries were interdependent and circular. The fish, when caught, were exported to the French West Indies and there bartered for molasses; the molasses was carried back to New England, and there distilled into rum; the rum taken to the West Coast of Africa, and there bartered for slaves; the slaves carried to the ports of the provinces of the South, and sold for cash; the cash, of course, being expended in fitting out more vessels, so that the circle could be again traversed.

In this commerce the town of Boston excelled, the number of its distilleries, fishing-vessels and slave-ships exceeding the aggregate of those of the other towns. This devout city would never have attained the prosperity it enjoyed at the period of the Revolution but for its pre-eminence in this infernal traffic. The very walls of its famous temples of liberty were cemented with the blood and tears of the slave.

Page 199 (3), "too pure to be breathed by a slave."

Declared to be a principle of English constitutional law, by a bench of judges in the first years of the seventeenth century. Lord Mansfield, by his decision in the case, merely asserted this ancient doctrine.

Page 199 (3), "all parts of the United States would be 'enriched.' "

Speech of Oliver Ellsworth, first Chief-Judge of the United States, in the Constitutional Convention.—Elliott's *Debates*, Vol. V., pp. 457, 458.

In view of this utterance it was grimly appropriate that a member of the Convention should complain that the federal tax on the importation of negroes would fall on the "*consumer*."

Other of the constructors of the Great Republic manifested similar sentiments: Mr. Pinckney "contended that the importation of slaves would be for the interest of the whole nation." And Mr. Rutledge declared that, "Religion and humanity had nothing to do with the question. Interest alone is the governing principle of nations."—Elliott's *Debates*, Vol. IV., p. 273; Vol. V., pp. 457, 459.

Some three-quarters of a century after these speeches were delivered, a distinguished son of New England, an enthusiastic panegyrist of the "Revolutionary Fathers," wrote the following lines, with a strange obliviousness to the fact that they applied with far greater pertinency to the men he was never tired of lauding than to those to whom he intended them to apply:

NOTES

"Is true freedom but to break
Fetters for our own dear sake,
And with leathern hearts forget
That we owe mankind a debt?
No! true freedom is to share
All the chains our brothers wear,
And with heart and hand to be
Earnest to make others free."

—James Russell Lowell.

Page 202 (⁴), "life for a sugar-mill slave does not exceed seven years."

The estimate here set forth of the life of a slave on the rice and sugar plantations is corroborated by Mr. Giddings, who asserted that the slaveholders of South Carolina, in convention, had decided that it was most profitable for them to use up the lives of their negroes within that time.—Giddings' *Speeches*, p. 142.

Page 202 (⁵), "the children from the parents."

George William Featherstonhaugh, one of the British Commissioners for delineating the northern boundary of the State of Maine, under the provisions of the Ashburton Treaty, in his *Excursions through the Slave States*. Published in 1844.

CHAPTER XIV.

Page 218 (¹), "'at the last moment.'"

History of England, Vol. IV., p. 91.

It would seem that Mr. Lecky, like all other British historians, has failed to grasp the fact that the support afforded to Lord Chatham by the American Disunionists (the only people in whose power it was to bring back the colonies peaceably to the Empire) was given because of their belief that, with his help, they would be able to take the colonies *out of the Empire*. After he had made it apparent that he was opposed to their secession, that support was withdrawn; we see his statue mutilated by the mob, and himself berated by one of the Disunion chiefs as having a "black spot" in his character, and a "perverted heart."

John Adams to Jennings, March 12, 1781: *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*, Vol. IV., p. 286. Jennings was one of the army of American spies living in London during the Revolutionary war.

NOTES

Page 219 (4), "two of their most distinguished chiefs."

"New York and Pennsylvania," wrote John Adams to Chief-Justice McKean, "were so nearly divided, if their propensity was not against us, that if New England on one side and Virginia on the other had not kept them in awe they would have joined the British. . . . The last contest in the town of Boston, in 1775, between Whig and Tory, was decided by five against two. *Upon the whole, if we allow two-thirds of the people to have been with us in the Revolution, is not the allowance ample?*" To which Judge McKean replied: "On mature deliberation, I conclude you are right, and that more than a third of influential characters were against it."—John Adams' *Works*, Vol. X., pp. 63, 87.

Chief-Judge Marshall, in his *Life of Washington*, speaks of "the people of the South being almost equally divided between the two contending parties."

Page 220 (4), "the ministry itself."

Said Dr. Johnson, with characteristic vehemence: "Such a bunch of imbecility never disgraced a country. . . . I will not say that what they did was always wrong; but it was always done at a wrong time."—Wallace's *Boswell*, p. 463.

Page 222 (4), "they do not apply at all."

That is, to the organizers of the secession movement and the chiefs of the seceding states; for that movement and the establishment of the Southern Confederacy were not the work of any "knot of men," but were supported by a vast majority of the people of the Southern States; yet the strongest count in the indictment of the British Government was that it had granted belligerent rights to a "faction;" a faction the suppression of which cost the United States Government three years and a half of warfare, and an immense expenditure of treasure and life.

Page 223 (6), "fancied or pretended injuries."

Perhaps, also, for another reason, for the archives of Boston contain plain proof of a shortage in the accounts of Samuel Adams when intrusted with public funds, which shortage his bondsmen were called upon to pay. This Governor Hutchinson plainly calls a defalcation, and there seems reason to believe that, had it not been for the opportune Disunion agitation, Adams would have been the subject of a criminal prosecution.

NOTES

Page 228 (6), "with the necessities of life."

Again we may take the testimony of Washington. In a letter written from the camp at Valley Forge, he complains:

"The situation of matters in this State is melancholy and alarming. *We have daily proof that a majority of the people in this quarter are only restrained from supplying the enemy with horses and every kind of necessary through fear of punishment;* and although I have made a number of severe examples, I cannot put a stop to the intercourse."—Washington to General Armstrong, March 27, 1778. Quoted by Stone in his *Border Wars of the Revolution*, Vol. I., p. 259.

Page 230 (7), "violated in America."

John Jay to John Adams, November 1, 1786: *Life and Letters of John Jay*, Vol. II., p. 191.

A statement to the same effect is embodied in Jay's report to Congress. Similar statements, also, were made in the Federal and State Conventions in 1787 and 1788. "We have seen with what little ceremony the States violated the peace with Great Britain," said Mr. Maclaine, of North Carolina. "In order to prevent the payment of British debts, and from other causes," said Mr. Wilson, of Pennsylvania, "our treaties have been violated, and violated, too, by the express laws of the several States of the Union. . . . And it is well known that when the minister of the United States made a demand on Lord Carmarthen of a surrender of the western posts, he [Carmarthen] told the minister, with truth and justice, 'The treaty under which you claim these possessions has not been performed on your part; until it is done, those possessions will not be given up.'" Mr. Corbin, of Virginia, also, declared that the payment of the debts had been "shamefully withheld."—Elliott's *Debates*, Vol. II., p. 490; Vol. III., p. 105; Vol. IV., p. 160.

Page 231 (8), "if Britain were sunk in the sea."

"Have we not this instant heard it urged against our envoy [John Jay] that he was not ardent enough in his hatred of Great Britain? . . . That nation must be extirpated. . . . If a treaty left King George his island, it would not answer, not if he stipulated to pay rent for it! It has been said the world ought to rejoice if Britain was sunk in the sea; if where there are now men and wealth, laws and liberty, there was no more than a sandbank for sea-monsters to fatten on, a space for the storms of the ocean to mingle in conflict."—Speech of Fisher Ames in the House of Representatives, in a debate on the Jay Treaty.

NOTES

Page 231 (⁹), "peals of exultation."

"All the old spirit of 1776 rekindling," wrote Thomas Jefferson to Madison, in an ecstasy of delight. "The newspapers from Boston to Charleston prove this, and even the monocrat [Federalist] papers are obliged to publish the most furious philippics against England. A French frigate took a British prize off the Capes of Delaware the other day and sent her up here [to Philadelphia]. Upon her coming into sight, thousands and thousands of the yeomanry of the city crowded and covered the wharves. Never before was such a crowd seen there, and when the British colors were seen reversed, and the French flying above them, *they burst into peals of exultation.*"—Jefferson to Madison, May 5, 1793: Jefferson's *Works* (Congress Edition), Vol. III., p. 548.

Page 231 (¹⁰), "fit objects for their detestation."

"A great majority of the American people deemed it criminal to remain unconcerned spectators of a conflict between their ancient enemy and republican France. . . . The few who did not embrace these opinions, and they were certainly very few, *were held up as objects of detestation*, and were calumniated as tools of Britain."—Marshall's *Life of Washington*, Vol. III., p. 256.

Page 232 (¹¹), "without serious impediment."

Evidence of Jefferson's complicity in these outrageous violations of neutrality, while he was a member of Washington's cabinet, may be found in abundance in the works of the early American writers, and even in his own correspondence and memoranda.

Page 232 (¹²), "the commerce of the French republic."

John Randolph—no friend of the British Government, for which he expressed his "aborrence"—in a speech made in 1806, before a Committee of the House, stigmatized this commerce as a trade "which covers the enemy's property, . . . this mushroom, this fungus of war," of which he declared the United States possessed "seven-eighths."

Page 233 (¹³), "without an ally."

Said Daniel Webster, in his speech in reply to Calhoun, in 1838: "We were at war with the greatest maritime power on earth, England. . . . At one time the whole continent had

NOTES

been closed against her. A long line of armed exterior, an unbroken hostile array, frowned upon her from the Gulf of Archangel, round the promontory of Spain and Portugal, to the extreme point of Italy. *There was not a port which an English ship could enter.*"

Page 233 (¹⁴), "her very existence as a nation."

"Great Britain," said John Randolph, in the speech lately referred to in these notes, is "contending, not for the dismantling of Dunkirk, for Quebec or Pondicherry, but for London and Westminster—for life!"

Page 234 (¹⁵), "peace with Great Britain."

"The acquisition of Canada this year" [1812], wrote Jefferson to General Duane, "as far as the neighborhood of Quebec, will be a mere matter of marching, and will give us experience for the attack of Halifax the next, and the final expulsion of England from the American continent."

About the same time he wrote to General Kosciusko: "England must give us peace and future security, and this can never be but by her removal from our neighborhood. We shall strip her of all her possessions on this continent. . . . The cession of Canada must be a sine qua non at a treaty of peace."—Jefferson's Works (Congress Edition), Vol. VI., pp. 75, 76.

Henry Clay, too, was quite as confident that Great Britain would be expelled from the continent of America with the greatest of ease. "I trust I shall not be deemed presumptuous," he said, during a debate in Congress, "when I state that I verily believe that the militia of Kentucky is alone competent to place Montreal and Upper Canada at your feet."—Debates of Congress, Vol. IV., 177.

And Crowninshield, of Massachusetts, not to be outdone, made the same claim for the militia of his State.

Page 235 (¹⁶), "by Henry Ward Beecher."

When Mr. Beecher was lecturing in England, during the American Civil War, he told his hearers that when he was a youth it was considered the first duty of a patriot to hate England.

Page 237 (¹⁷), "of the Book of Genesis."

This was John Quincy Adams, who in the House of Representatives quoted Genesis I. 26-28, containing the command of

NOTES

God to man to "be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth," as a justification of the attempt of his countrymen to annex British territory.

Von Holst suggests that this argument is analogous to that of "manifest destiny." "Nevertheless," he adds, "it can scarcely be thought anything but laughable when a leading statesman seeks to deduce the justice of a claim of territory from the Mosaic account of the creation."—*Constitutional History of the United States*, Vol. III., p. 31.

Page 238 (¹⁹), "rusted in the scabbard."

The extent to which, for a decade or so before the Spanish-American war, the journals of the United States uttered dire threats against Great Britain for her assumed intent to "violate the Monroe Doctrine," can hardly be conceived by those who did not have the privilege of reading them. One patriotic and intelligent writer sternly censured the British Government for refusing to acknowledge that the Monroe *doctrine* was part of international *law*!

Page 241 (²⁰), "the sacred rights of mankind."

During the South African War, stories derogatory to the courage and honor of the British soldiers were eagerly sought and reproduced by the journals of the United States; even invented, for it is said that one Western journal employed a staff of writers to fabricate such stories. Nor was the pictorial method of libel neglected. As I write I have before me a half-page illustration, published by a great newspaper syndicate, showing an English armored train, to stanchions on the sides of which were bound some six Boer maidens, their hair flying in the wind and terror in their faces, exposed to the fire of their friends, for the protection of the cowardly British soldiers crouching beneath the armored barrier out of harm's way!

Page 244 (²¹), "antagonistic to our nation."

Gouverneur Morris, p. 228.

This is the belief of Mr. Roosevelt. Mr. Gladstone, who perhaps was as well informed upon the subject, held a different opinion. In a speech delivered at Leith, on January 10, 1862, he said: "I do not believe that at the time when the convulsion [the American Civil War] commenced there was one man in a thousand in this country who had any sentiments whatever towards the United States of America except a sentiment of affectionate, sympathizing good-will, or who felt any-



NOTES

thing but a desire that they might continue to go on and prosper."—Speech reported in the *Times*, January 13, 1862.

Page 248 (²¹), "as it had in the South."

During the generation immediately preceding the war these conditions were even more marked. Writing at that period, Mr. Garrison asserted that there was greater need of a revolution of public opinion in regard to slavery in the North than in the South. "Here" [in Boston], he wrote, in the first number of the *Liberator*, "I found contempt more bitter, detraction more relentless, prejudice more stubborn, and apathy more frozen, than among slaveholders themselves."

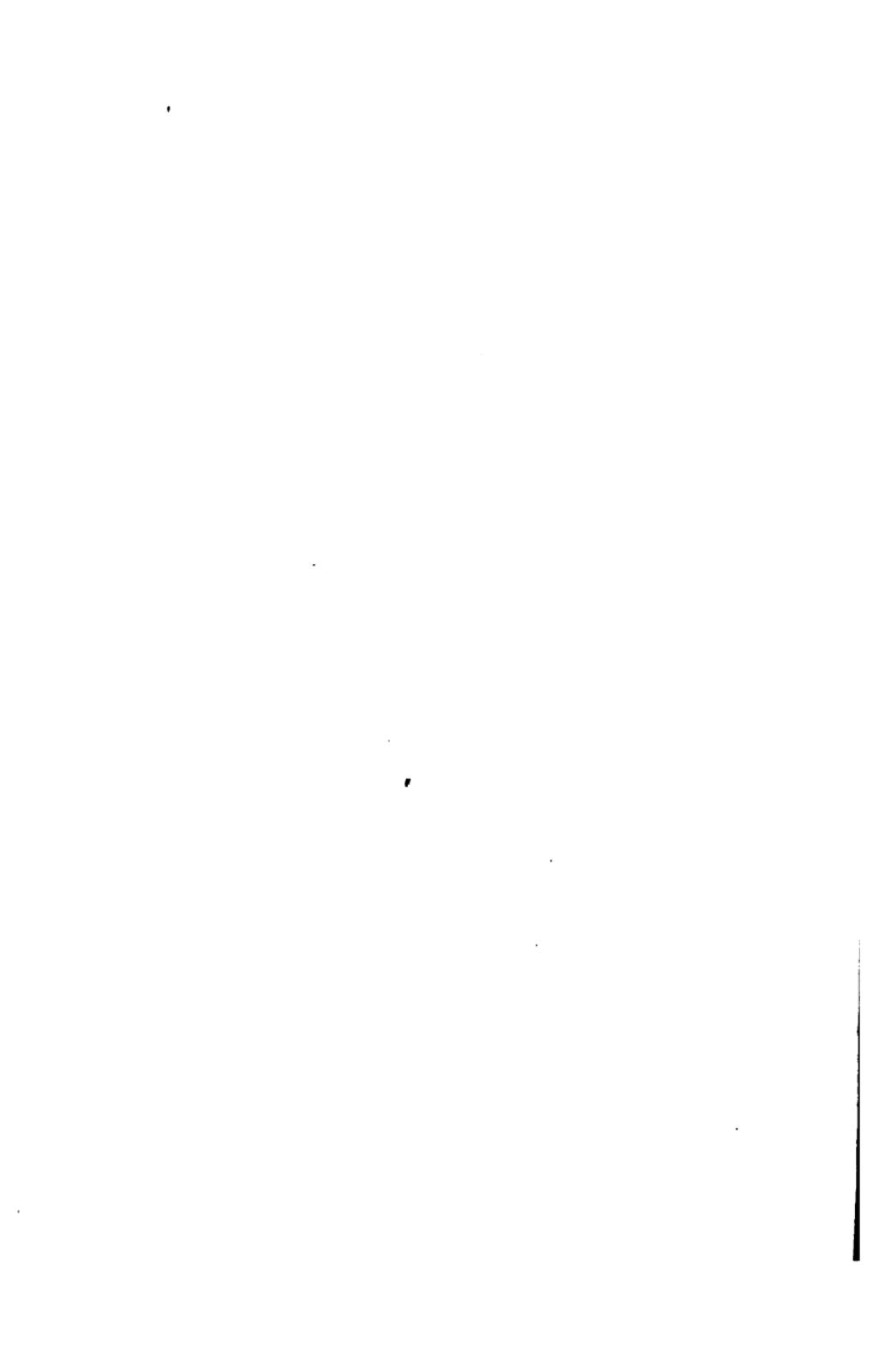
Page 249 (²²), "the determination of the North to suppress it."

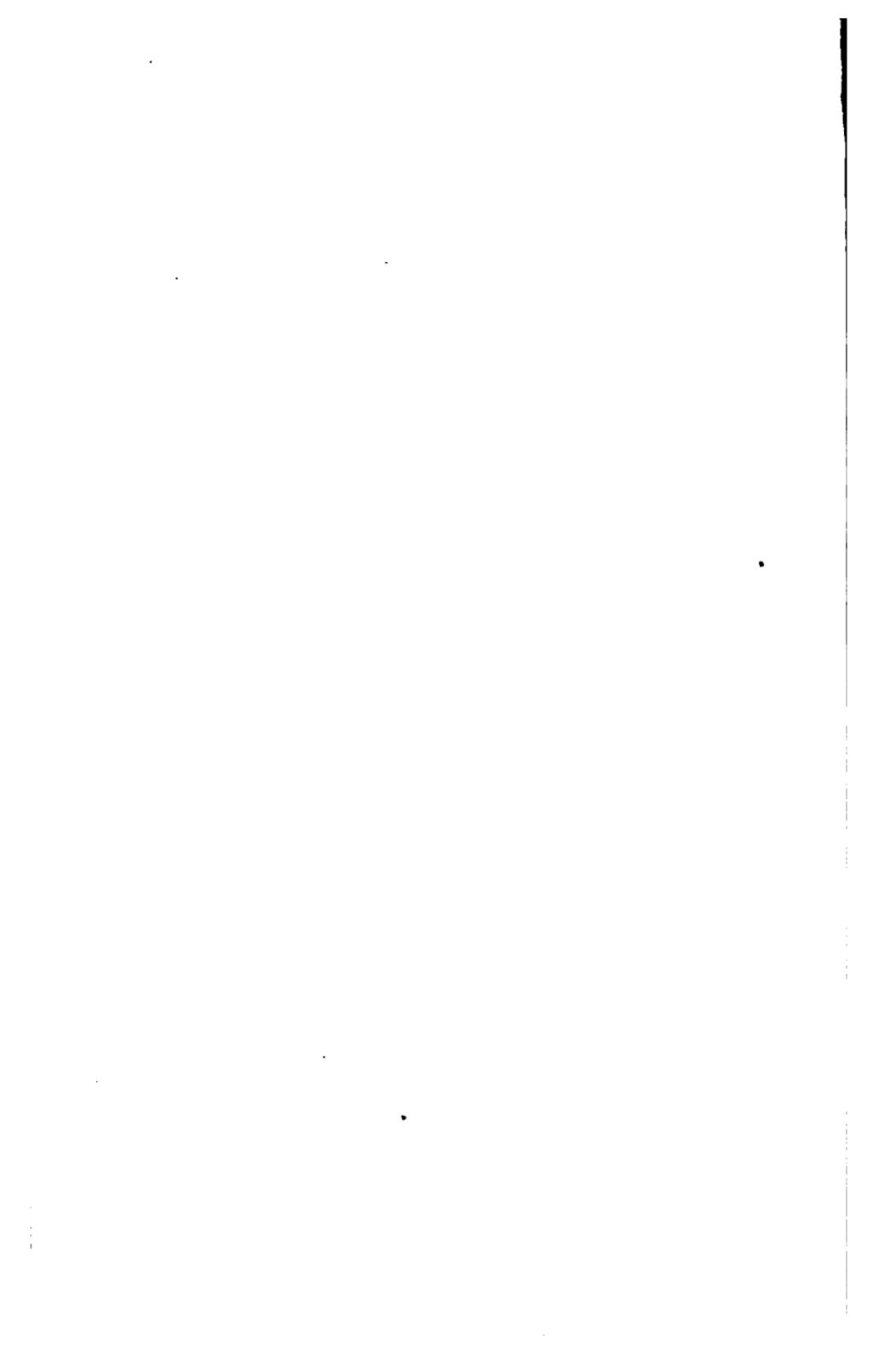
Among them, Mr. Charles Francis Adams, who, in his life of the elder Charles Francis, declares that, "The governing and aristocratic classes, especially in London, *were at heart in sympathy with the slaveholding movement.*"

With equal truth he might have asserted that they *were at heart in sympathy with the witch-burning movement*. One is quite as unthinkable as the other.









14 DAY USE
RETURN TO DESK FROM WHICH BORROWED
LOAN DEPT.

This book is due on the last date stamped below,
or on the date to which renewed. Renewals only:

Tel. No. 642-3405

Renewals may be made 4 days prior to date due.
Renewed books are subject to immediate recall.

RETURNED TO

MAR 20 1971

LOAN AHC

**Due end of SPRING Quarter MAY 17 '72 73
subject to recall after —**

REC'D LD MAY 20 73 -3 PM 5 6

YB 37314

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY

